Jemaah Islamiyah leader confirms MILF support

Story on PAGE A2

AFP, Malaysia hope 5 hostages still alive

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A kidnapped Malaysian resort worker, who escaped from his abductors in Tawi-Tawi last week, has retracted his claim that five of his fellow hostages had been killed by their captors, the military yesterday

AFP/ A7

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WHAT'S INSIDE

- **RP-US troops start military exercise** NEWS /A2
- **Stocks hit 18-month high** BUSINESS /B1
- **GMA 7, Probe Team end 16-year partnership** NEWS /A3

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Tuesday, November 4, 2003 ★★ 44 pages / 4 sections / vol. 18 / no. 298 P15 website: www.inq7.net

PRO-IMPEACHMENT. Elderly women with clenched fists man the frontline of a rally against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. before the Supreme Court Monday. The members of the Kilusan Para sa Makatarungang Lipunan at Gobyerno said the Chief Justice must face trial by the impeachment court. REUTERS

STOP
IMPEACHMENT
MOVEMENT

PRO-DAVIDE. A newly formed alliance warns that powerful vested interests are behind the move to impeach Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. They called on the people to "call, text, e-mail or mail" the congressmen who signed the impeachment complaint. Among the group's leaders are Fr. Robert Reyes of Gomburza, Ric Reyes of Akbayan, Bong Montesa of Libertas and Chuck Lesanto. ERIK ARAZAS

NPC threatens Joe de V

Impeachment bloc to unseat Speaker if Lakas bid succeeds

By Juan Escandor Jr. *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*
and Carlito Pablo *in Manila*

NAGA CITY—The core group of congressmen which filed the second impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. will not take the ruling Lakas party's *agaw-pirma* (signature-snatching) campaign sitting down. If the campaign succeeds, pro-impeachment congressmen led by the Nationalist People's Coalition said they would move to unseat Speaker Jose de Venecia himself.

Rep. Felix William "Wimpy" Fuentebella, one of the two principal signatories to the complaint, said yesterday his group has a major plan to unseat De Venecia in case the House fails to transmit the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate.

But other congressmen identified with either the impeachment drive or the campaign to stop it began talking yesterday about specific "principled solutions" to resolve the constitutional crisis.

Pro-impeachment Rep. Constantino Jaraula (LDP, Cagayan de Oro City) made public a five-point formula for settling the crisis, which drew positive initial feedback from NPC spokesperson Rep. Francis Escudero and anti-impeachment advocates Representatives Butch Abad and Etta Rosales.

But Fuentebella stayed on message, saying the plan to unseat De Venecia would depend on what

NPC/ A8

Cebu solon barraged by hate text over Davide stand

By Jhunnex Napallacan and Suzzane B. Salva
PDI Visayas Bureau

A MEMBER of the House of Representatives has found herself being harassed through text messages and telephone calls for signing the impeachment complaint against a fellow Cebuano, Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

Cebu Rep. Nerissa Soon-Ruiz of the sixth district has been deluged with text messages after her name surfaced as among those who

CEBU / A6

MOVE OVER 'GG'
President Macapagal declares the tilapia—not galunggong—the new "food of the masses." The President helps disperse tilapia fingerlings in Barangay Palingon, Calamba, Laguna, during the 34th anniversary of the Laguna Lake Development Authority. *Story on Page 3.* VAL HANDUMON

Businessmen give Congress thumbs down

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE MORE senators and congressmen push the impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., the more Congress loses its credibility —at least among businessmen.

In an interview with ABS-CBN News Channel 21 yesterday, Philippine-based business consultant Peter Wallace said the latest move by Congress to impeach Davide has done little to improve its credibility.

The latest quarterly survey by Wallace's firm on the economic outlook of CEOs of multinational corporations operating in the Philippines showed how low the credibility of Congress had sunk.

The survey asked 62 CEOs, many of them Filipinos, how they would rate the perfor-

BUSINESSMEN/ A4

House lawyer finds Davide case too hot to handle

By Carlito Pablo, Volt Contreras and Michael Lim Ubac

FINDING the impeachment case against the Chief Justice too hot to handle, lawyer Mario Ongkiko has declined the offer of the House of Representatives to be its private counsel.

Ongkiko, who was supposed to assist the House in responding to the Supreme Court's status quo order on the impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., informed Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. of his decision on Friday.

While the House failed to enlist the services of Ongkiko, it got support from opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

HOUSE/ A4

GMA asks for divine intervention again

NASA DIYOS ANG PAG ASA

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

SEEKING to rise above the crisis involving co-equal branches of government, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday sought help from someone who has no equal: God.

Ms Macapagal appealed for divine intervention to resolve the constitutional crisis arising from the House move to impeach Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

Hearing Mass in Malacañang, the President hinted that the hand of God would prevail on Nov. 10 when

GMA/ A8

AFP puts troops on nationwide alert

By TJ Burgonio and Christian Esguerra

THE MILITARY announced yesterday that it was placing its men on nationwide red alert starting today amid fresh rumors that some military officers were agitating their colleagues to mount another destabilization attempt.

The upgrading of the alert status from white to red takes effect at 7 a.m. today. The red alert is the highest in the Armed Forces' three-tiered alert level scheme.

Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, military chief information officer, said the red alert declaration was in anticipation of protest rallies over the impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., and not an offshoot of a fresh round of coup rumors.

"This alert status is meant to prepare our civil management units for any eventual rallies that will be conducted by cause-oriented groups," he said at a press briefing in Camp Aguinaldo.

"I'd like to stress here that this alert level status has nothing to do with these rumors being spread that some members of the AFP will be joining any destabilization move," he added.

An undetermined number of troops will be deployed at the Edsa Shrine in Quezon City and "its environs" to aid the civil disturbance management units of the national police, Lucero said.

The Philippine National Police yesterday downplayed fears of a coup. But the PNP still sent more than 400 officers to train primarily in civil disturbance management (CDM) at Camp Crame in preparation for more impeachment-related mass actions.

This deployment includes at least 200 members of CDM units from Central Luzon and the Calabarzon area and two companies from the Headquarters Support Service and the elite Special Action Force. The Central Luzon contingent arrived at around 10 p.m. Sunday.

Chief Supt. Enrique Galang,

AFP/ A8

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/11/04/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

JI leader confirms MILF help

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE SECOND-ranking leader of the Jemaah Islamiyah in the Philippines has confirmed that the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has been supporting the operations of the regional terrorist network in Mindanao, a senior police official said yesterday.

The official said that Taufek Refke, who is also JI's paymaster in the country, revealed during interrogation that the MILF provided JI operatives with safe houses and facilities where they could train new recruits to the Islamic militant group.

The MILF has consistently denied coddling JI operatives in its camps and has even offered to assist the government in its manhunt for members of the terrorist network.

But the source said that the 23-year-old Refke was in touch with the MILF on several occasions because as JI's finance and liaison officer in the Philippines, he facilitated the arrival of recruits in JI training schools in the country.

These were halted only after Refke was arrested at a hotel in Cotabato City on Oct. 2. His arrest led to the raid of a suspected JI hideout in Cotabato City where government forces recovered bomb-making equipment and radical Islamic literature. He is now in the custody of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

"Based on Refke's confession and reports that we've been receiving from the field," the source told the INQUIRER on condition of anonymity, "the JI is still getting a certain amount of support from the MILF to this day."

Contradiction

Refke's revelation contradicted MILF's consistent pronouncement that it had long cut off ties with any terrorist organization, more so the JI, which is believed to have links to the al-Qaida terrorist network of Osama bin Laden.

But with the scheduled peace talks between the government and the MILF, the official said the secessionist group has limited its support to allowing its "rank and file" to serve as bodyguards for JI operatives coming to the Philippines from neighboring countries, particularly Indonesia.

The JI, according to the source, no longer needs the MILF in finding safe houses because the group already has several of them scattered in Mindanao as admitted by Refke during interrogation.

The official said both the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces were now racing to find these hideouts before the JI could stage any terrorist strike. So far, authorities were successful only in Cotabato City.

Confidence-building

On Sunday, MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu even offered to help the government hunt down around 30 JI members believed to be hiding in Mindanao, as a confidence-building measure for the upcoming peace negotiations.

Mindful of the existing "tie-up" between the JI and the MILF, the official said the PNP was giving the secessionist group the "benefit of the doubt" and was welcoming Kabalu's offer to help in the government's anti-terrorism efforts.

"We don't want to compromise the peace talks so we're assuming that the MILF is always acting in good faith," he said.

An initial step toward the negotiation was the May 6, 2002 signing of a joint communique in which the government and the MILF agreed to the "isolation and interdiction of all criminal syndicates and kidnap-for-ransom groups, including so-called 'lost commands' operating in Mindanao."

Part of the agreement was the creation of a joint action group composed of representatives from the PNP, AFP, and the MILF. The group would serve as a "clearing house" for all operations that the government would conduct in MILF territories in Mindanao, according to Deputy Director Gen. Virtus Gil, PNP chief for operations and representative to the joint action group.

As this developed, Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla yesterday expressed his approval to MILF's offer to hunt down JI operatives in Mindanao, saying this was a "point for the ongoing talks.'

Capalla, incoming president of the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, said he believed in the sincerity of the MILF to help the government achieve peace in the region. *With a report from Blanche S. Rivera*

Traders demand Comelec execs' heads

By Norman Bordadora

A NON-PARTISAN organization of businessmen and professionals has sought the resignation of all top officials of the Commission on Elections for their alleged faulty handling of the bidding for automated counting machines.

The group, May Pag-asa, yesterday also asked the government to shelve the automation of the May 2004 elections due to the alleged deficiency of the automated counting machines that would be used in some regions.

"Due to gross incompetence and suspicion of massive graft and corruption and even plunder, we demand that the Comelec en banc resign immediately," said Francisco Catibayan, May Pag-asa spokesperson.

Catibayan said the Comelec acted with undue haste when it bid out the contract for the counting machines. Only two companies submitted bids for the project and both fell short of the requirements, he said.

"We ask the President to appoint truly honest, unimpeachable and very competent new Comelec commissioners immediately," Catibayan said in an e-mail to the INQUIRER.

"We have completely lost our trust and confidence in the current Comelec commissioners for very good reasons.

Needless to say, the new commissioners should not be party men or traditional politicians," he added.

May Pag-asa urged the government to cancel the Comelec's contract with Mega Pacific e-Solutions because of the alleged rigged bidding and the deficiency of the machines, which Catibayan said depend too much on the human factor.

"The machines should be returned and the money should be refunded to the national treasury," Catibayan said.

He added that for lack of time, the Comelec should revert to manual counting of votes nationwide.

The Comelec, however, said there would be partial automated elections in 2004 in areas such as Metro Manila and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

US troops here to train amid tight security

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—At least 500 United States military personnel, some of them fresh from assignments in Iraq, have been barred from leaving the Talon Vision-04 training camps here amid security concerns.

"There's no planned leave or liberty while we are here," said Col. Steven Busby, Talon Vision co-director, of the 15-day joint military exercise which formally began here on Monday.

Busby said not a single US soldier would be spending time on "R and R" in the bars, restaurants and karaoke joints on Fields Ave., Angeles City's red light district.

"Not for this exercise, no. We are here to train. That's where our focus is," he said. "We have some pretty intensive plans."

In a press conference held after Monday's opening ceremony, during which he was briefed by Maj. Gen. Romeo Dominguez, Philippine Army Northern Luzon Command chief, on the country's different threat groups, Busby said the problem of terrorism was "not going to affect" the exercise.

"Our force protection is always our No. 1 priority," he said, adding that the security measures put in place by the Philippine military and police as well as the Clark Special Economic Zone were "more than sufficient."

Dominguez identified the threat groups as the New People's Army, the Muslim separatist groups and kidnap-for-ransom gangs like the Abu Sayyaf and Pentagon.

For Talon Vision, which is being held mainly at Clark and the Crow Valley firing range in Capas, Tarlac, the US contingent is using six CH-53 E, four CH-53 D, four AH-1W Cobra and four UH-1 attack helicopters, Busby said. Also in the fleet are two KC-130 cargo planes. *Tonette Orejas and Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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'Jericho agents good only for 6 mos'

TASK Force Jericho was not abolished; operatives were merely recalled to their mother units.

DILG Secretary Joey Lina said a new Jericho would be fielded soon. "A batch of agents is really good only for six months," he told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

The Department of Interior and Local Government yesterday denied published reports on the demise of the task force, which was formed to curb illegal gambling, specifically jueteng.

Lina refuted allegations the Jericho agents had failed to deliver. In short, a department statement said, this was a routine reshuffle "to prevent familiarization between the officers and their supposed targets, the gambling lords."

DILG Undersecretary Agripino Morga had a slightly different explanation. He said the agents' recall, effective Nov. 1, was in accordance with the "career-pathing," being implemented by the Philippine National Police for its officers and men.

Lina was also annoyed by observations that he had not resigned even after his self-imposed deadline to curb jueteng expired last May.

He said people should not raise a fuss over this, since it was not his primary responsibility to run after illegal gambling operators. *Nelson F. Flores and Christian Esguerra; With Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Erap upbeat about US trip, denies anew he would flee

By Armand Nocum

OUSTED President Joseph Estrada yesterday said he was optimistic the Sandiganbayan will finally grant his request to be treated in the United States, given his deteriorating physical condition which could result in his paralysis from the waist down.

At the same time, the ex-president allayed fears he was a flight risk, saying he could never live a life away from the country. "It's not my place. My place is here," said Estrada, adding he would miss his loyal friends and supporters here.

Estrada is on trial before the Sandiganbayan anti-graft court for plunder, a non-bailable offense.

He has been seeking the court's permission to fly to the United States where he prefers to undergo knee surgery in the hands of Dr. Christopher Mow of the Stanford Medical Center.

The Sandiganbayan's Special Division, which is hearing Estrada's plunder and graft case, last year denied a similar request from Estrada's lawyers. The anti-graft court noted that Estrada was a flight risk and the operation he needs could be performed by local surgeons.

Estrada's personal surgeon, Dr. Lorenzo Hocson, said the operation and therapy would take about three months. But Estrada said he plans to spend one month of therapy here.

"I cannot stay in the US that long. I will easily get homesick," Estrada told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

As proof that he would not flee, Estrada said he turned down twice former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez's offer for him to leave the country shortly after he was unseated.

"The offer was made even before the (plunder charges were filed). I declined to take the offer. So, why will I do that now?" he said.

More than the risk of flight, he said he fears the possibility the government will bar him from returning to the country. Should he be allowed to leave, he said he would ask for a government guarantee that he would be allowed to return.

Orthopedic experts at the Asian Hospital and Medical Center in Alabang, where Estrada has undergone an extensive medical checkup, said the former president's arthritic knees have greatly affected his ability to walk and this lack of movement has caused his spine to be "deformed" and "strangulated."

If not operated on immediately, Estrada's "internal knee derangement" could result in his becoming paralyzed, they said.

They recommended that a knee replacement operation be done as soon as possible.

Pangasinan not keen on FPJ, officials say

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BINALONAN, Pangasinan—Movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. would not get the support of Pangasinenses if he decides to run for the presidency although he traces his roots to Pangasinan since President Macapagal-Arroyo is likewise from this vote-rich province, local officials said.

Officials said Ms Macapagal's mother, former First Lady Evangelina Macaraeg , hailed from Lingayen.

Not afraid of Poe

Mayor Ramon Guico, president of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines, said the administration party Lakas-Christian Muslim Democracts is not afraid of Poe because the "party leadership already knows how to counter his popularity."

Guico, a distant cousin of Ms Macapagal's, said Poe does not pose a threat to Ms Macapagal's presidential bid because the actor does not know anything about governance.

Guico has asked Lakas leaders to challenge Poe to a debate on how to manage the country, "so the people will have an idea on who he really is and what he knows about running a government."

"Poe is popular, but if the people can have a glimpse on his intellectual capacity, then maybe they will change their minds about voting him to the highest office," he said.

Guico doubted, however, if Poe would agree to a debate with other presidential aspirants because, he said, the actor would just be "embarrassed."

"If he becomes president and he (needs) to discuss (various issues) with other countries' leaders, will he know what to say?" Guico asked.

A Poe supporter in the province said that while many sectors are asking him to run for president, nobody has volunteered to bankroll his candidacy.

"It is not easy running for president. You need money. Who will finance his candidacy?" the supporter said.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., who represents Pangasinan's fourth district, agreed with Guico and urged Pangasinenses to "use their heads" in 2004.

"They (Poe and Ms Macapagal) are both from Pangasinan, but (the President) is purer Pangasinense. Her mother, who was born in Lingayen, grew up in Binalonan," De Venecia said.

Born in Manila

Poe, on the other hand, traces his roots to San Carlos City and the towns of Mangatarem and Bayambang. However, he was born and grew up in Metro Manila.

De Venecia said Ms Macapagal has given much help to the province in terms of infrastructure projects like bridges, irrigation canals and public markets, "and she always comes whenever the province is hit by typhoons and floods."

He said he had talked to Poe about his candidacy. "I don't think he will run," De Venecia said.

Bigger OFW remittances seen this year

By Martin Marfil

DOLLAR remittances of overseas Filipino workers continued to rise this year despite the drop in the numbers of workers deployed abroad, the Department of Labor and Employment said yesterday.

The latest DOLE statistics showed that OFW remittances from January to August this year reached $5.06 billion, which is 4.79 percent higher than the $4.83 billion remitted in the same period last year. In 2002, total. OFW remittances amounted to $7.189 billion.

DOLE believes that Filipinos based in the United States will remain the biggest source of dollar remittances. From only $339 million in 1985, total remittances by Filipinos in the US grew to $3.682 billion last year.

Acting Labor Secretary Manuel Imson said he still expects total OFW remittances this year to surpass last year's $7.189 billion.

"We are expecting our workers abroad to send more money to their relatives back home because of the favorable exchange rate," Imson told reporters, adding that the coming Christmas season will also be a factor.

Imson said this has become a "tradition," saying that Filipino workers tending to remit more when the peso, vis-à-vis the US dollar is down.

The rise in dollar remittances in the first eight months this year came despite data showing that overseas workers deployment—from January to October—dropped by 5.7 percent compared to figures last year.

But Imson yesterday told reporters that the drop in OFW deployment was "not substantial."

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration said only 709,065 Filipinos were able to get foreign job contracts from January to Oct. 22 this year compared to 752,272 in the same period last year.

Imson added that the drop in OFW deployment was noted in Asia, but not in Europe and America where OFWs who earn much more are deployed.

These workers, he said, were not affected by the SARS scare which spread throughout Asia.

Labor officials earlier said that the drop was caused by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome scare and the Iraq war in the early part of the year.

The Probe Team, GMA-7 end 16-year partnership

By Margaux Ortiz

THE PROBE Team will air its last episode at the end of the month after GMA-7, its mother network for 16 years, decided to end their partnership, citing differences in standards.

The last Probe Team show will air on Nov. 25.

In a letter to Probe Productions president Cheche Lazaro on Sept. 30, GMA president and chief executive officer Felipe Gozon said: "It appeared to us that Probe and GMA-7 no longer shared the same standards in making accusations or conclusions of fact in their public affairs programs."

GMA-7 delayed by one week the airing of The Probe Team episode on Sept. 16 which featured a lifestyle check on Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. chair Efraim Genuino for lack of supporting documents.

Old records

Gozon said GMA Network found inadequate The Probe Team's reliance on old Securities and Exchange Commission records to support its accusation that Genuino did not declare some properties in his 2001 and 2002 statements of assets and liabilities (SAL).

After telling Probe the story could air the following week provided it obtained the proper documentary evidence, GMA-7 was besieged with text messages and comments on the night the episode failed to air, Gozon said.

The GMA president said Probe's next moves of screening the episode at the University of the Philippines in Diliman and giving statements to the press prompted the network to respond in its prime-time newscast, Frontpage.

He said that after The Probe Team agreed to qualify its conclusion in the Genuino episode, the network allowed it to air the story the following week.

"Nevertheless, Probe had already accused the network of censoring the episode," Gozon said.

"We would not have made the proposal that enabled the episode to be aired the following week if our intention was to censor it," he said.

Gozon said that in spite of the many years of fruitful partnership with Probe, GMA-7 felt a parting of the ways was best for both organizations as both had their own integrity and images to protect.

Last to know

When the INQUIRER talked to The Probe Team supervising producer Albert Sumaya Jr., he said they had yet to receive a copy of GMA-7's letter.

He said that before Lazaro left for Hong Kong on Thursday, she wrote Gozon asking for confirmation of The Probe Team's "last day."

Sumaya said it seemed the media were told about GMA-7's decision before Probe was.

He added that Lazaro, who returned to Manila yesterday afternoon, had yet to read Gozon's letter.

"We are not bitter but sad about what happened," Sumaya said in a phone interview. "Who would have wanted to end a good show that lasted 16 years?"

Sumaya said they would be preparing for The Probe Team's last episode highlighting its 16 years on television.

Gozon said in his statement that they were not closing the door on Probe Productions and would continue to air its other programs like Art is Kool and Cheche Lazaro Presents.

He also said they were not canceling the Husay Pinoy project, which is being undertaken by Probe for the network.

Gozon said they intend to air past Probe episodes in other countries, when GMA launches its international channel in the coming months.

Tilapia, not 'galunggong,' named 'food of the masses'

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

MOVE over, *galunggong*.

The Tilapia is the new "food of the masses," according to President Macapagal-Arroyo. It is cheaper, tastier and easier to propagate, the President said in a speech during the 34th anniversary of the Laguna Lake Development Authority in Calamba, Laguna.

And if it's the best for poor Filipinos, then it is "my favorite" fish.

"Ask the DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development) officials. Whenever I visit, they serve me tilapia," said Ms Macapagal, who was DSWD secretary when she was Vice President.

She said *galunggong* had become costlier because it was harvested from the sea, and sometimes even "imported."

"We can cultivate tilapia in lakes and in fishponds," the President noted. "It is cheaper because we can control supply. So it is only fitting that we make it our everyday fare."

The theme of the LLDA celebration was "Bountiful Lake, Strong Republic," and centered on the elevation of the tilapia as the new staple.

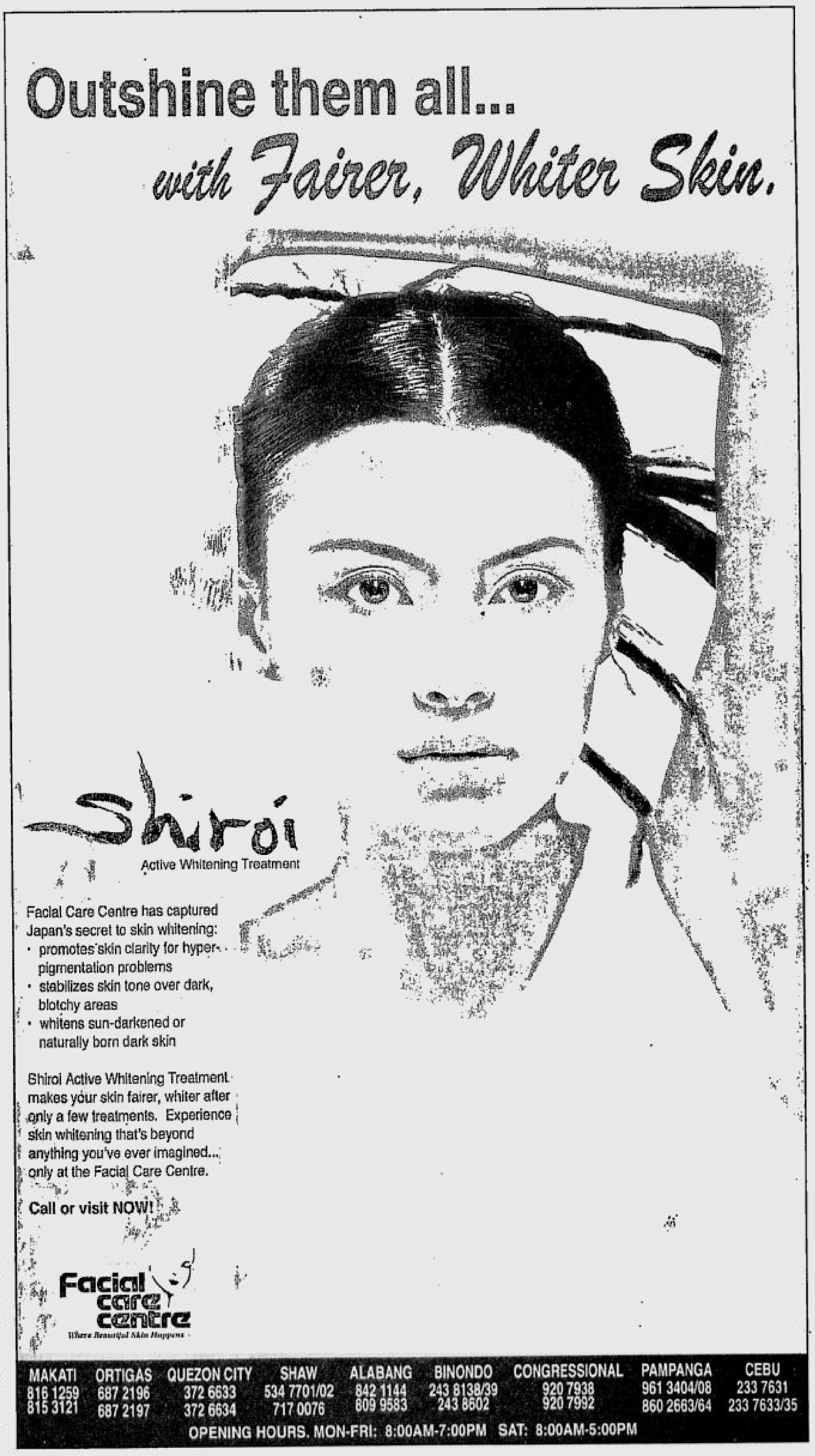
During the program, the President was presented samples of 12 tilapia dishes.

Ms Macapagal led in the dispersal of 10,000 *tilapia* fingerlings and the ceremonial placement of the LLDA buoy to signify the prohibition of fishing in the agency's 5,000-hectare fish sanctuary.

Ms Macapagal said Laguna Lake should be protected in order to secure the livelihood of the fishermen dependent on it. She said this required controlling the inflow of waste from surrounding factories and households, and the protection of nearby watershed areas.

According to the President, she makes it a point to check the condition of the lake waters whenever she takes a helicopter ride.

She said she was thankful that many parts of the lake have a "healthy blue" color.



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Businessmen give Congress thumbs down

From page A1

mance of Congress.

According to Wallace, 50 percent of the respondents said Congress was doing a "lousy" job; 34 percent said it was doing a "poor" job; and 16 percent said it was not doing "good enough."

"Nobody said it was a doing a fair job," Wallace said.

In a recent speaking engagement before Ateneo de Manila University students, Wallace asked how many of them would want Congress abolished.

He said "99 percent raised their hands," and he reckoned the only one who didn't must have been a son of a congressman.

Wallace said the impeachment of Davide, coming just a few months after the Oakwood mutiny in July, has hurt the Philippines' image so much.

"Getting foreign investments into the country has become an increasingly impossible task," he said.

Wallace urged the congressmen to withdraw their impeachment complaint. "If the congressmen care about their constituents and those who need jobs, they should reconsider their position, drop the impeachment case and let an independent auditor settle the issue. The main issue here is whether there should be an impeachment at all."

He described the present Congress as the "worst-performing" for passing fewer bills than any of the previous four Congresses.

Wallace said Congress should get back to its main duty of passing laws for the nation and stop its fixation with investigations in aid of legislation.

Wallace said that there are 12 bills that need to be passed by Congress to boost government revenues and address the ballooning budget deficit estimated at over P200 billion this year.

"They should pass these bills and show that they can do their jobs necessary to develop this country," he said.

According to him, the priority bills pending in Congress involve the indexation of sin taxes, rationalization of the documentary stamp tax, operationalization of the gross receipts tax on banks and financial institutions, securitization act, Transco franchise, creation of the National Revenue Administration, and a cap on debt service.

"Do your job and for heavens sake, stop this impeachment case. It is doing great harm to this nation and it is not justified. Take a different tact to find out the truth," Wallace said.

"Congressmen should so start listening more to their constituents and the public on what they should be doing," he added.

Wallace said that an impeachment case should only be reserved for "very serious offenses" such as the corruption charges against then President Joseph Estrada in 2000.

He also questioned the haste of certain lawmakers in filing the impeachment complaint and the vested interests of the signatories.

"It is clearly politically motivated, too Machiavellian. It has not been assessed intellectually but along party lines and that makes it by sheer definition politically motivated," Wallace said.

He said the attacks against Davide were "petty and not worthy of impeachment" as these merely involved expenditures on the renovation of the summer houses of the Supreme Court and the purchase of vehicles for the justices.

He suggested that an independent internationally respected auditor be appointed to look not only into the Judiciary Development Fund but also the Countryside Development Fund (pork barrel) of lawmakers.

"I'm sure (the congressmen) have properly used their funds; otherwise they wouldn't go through a case like this," Wallace said.

Even so, Wallace said he had a "slight reservation" over the appointment of Davide's son as vice chair of the bids and awards committee of the Supreme Court.

"It's not illegal but it's not quite right; one has to be extremely careful especially if you're with the Supreme Court," he said.

MANILA-BASED business consultant Peter Wallace says Congress' move to impeach Davide has done little to improve its credibility.

House lawyer finds Davide case too hot to handle

From page A1

Claiming that impeachment was a "purely political act," Pimentel contested yesterday the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court over issues related to the impeachment.

In a motion to intervene filed with the Supreme Court, Pimentel reminded the 15 members of the tribunal that as "wisely provided in Article XI of the Constitution, the exclusive power to initiate impeachment proceedings is lodged with the House of Representatives and the sole power to try and decide impeachment cases is lodged with the Senate as an impeachment court."

Pimentel said the status quo order issued by the Supreme Court on Oct. 26 stopping the Senate from receiving and from acting on any Articles of Impeachment that may be transmitted to it "demeans the Senate's sole jurisdiction to resolve all matters pertaining to impeachment."

He then asked that he be allowed to intervene in the six consolidated cases questioning the constitutionality of the second impeachment complaint against Davide, and be allowed to argue, as a senator of the republic, during the oral arguments scheduled for tomorrow.

Like Pimentel, the House yesterday told the Supreme Court that the tribunal had no jurisdiction over the six petitions before it seeking to stop the transmittal of the impeachment complaint to the Senate for trial.

In a manifestation submitted to the tribunal, De Venecia said the court had no jurisdiction over this highly political matter and that there was a moral compulsion for it not to handle the petitions because all of its justices were subject to impeachment.

"We call on the Honorable Court to exercise judicial statesmanship on the principle that whenever possible, the Court should defer to the judgment of the people, expressed legislatively, recognizing full well the perils of judicial willfulness and pride," he said.

The manifestation was in response to the resolution of the court en banc for De Venecia, Senate President Franklin Drilon and other proponents of the impeachment complaint against Davide to file their comment on the pending petitions not later than Nov. 3.

A congressman, who asked not to be named but was privy to the legal defense of the House, said Ongkiko had found the impeachment case "too messy."

"Let's just say that we agreed with the Speaker that I would not be the best lawyer for the House," said Ongkiko, who remained silent on his reasons for turning down what could have been another gritty job in the national limelight after serving as chief counsel of the Feliciano Commission that probed the the July 27 failed coup.

"I promised the Speaker I would not add to the confusion," he added when pressed.

Ongkiko was supposed to help the House legal team composed of Representatives Clavel Martinez (Lakas, Cebu), Francis Escudero (NPC, Sorsogon), Rolex Suplico (LDP, Iloilo), Gilbert Teodoro (NPC, Tarlac) and Arthur Defensor (Lakas, Iloilo).

With Ongkiko declining the offer, the House is tapping its in-house lawyer Leonardo Palicte III to appear as counsel for the chamber. Suplico said Ongkiko's move "will not affect the House defense."

The House's legal arguments had been laid down at last week's multi-party caucus, which boils down to the House not recognizing the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court regarding the Davide impeachment, according to Suplico.

Ongkiko's decision was welcomed by a colleague in the Kapatiran sa Pangkalahatang Kabutihan (Movement for the Common Good), which is seeking accreditation as a political party before the Commission on Elections.

Ongkiko is Kapatiran's president, said the group's chair Renaldo "Nandy" Pacheco.

"I have not talked to him about it (House appointment) and he has his own reasons. But if he's really not doing it, it means he will have more time for Kapatiran," Pacheco said.

Launched in August last year, Kapatiran seeks stricter gun control, and the abolition of the pork barrel, the death penalty and state-sponsored gambling, among others.

Instability

In his motion, Pimentel said that fears of political and economic instability foisted by some quarters should not muddle the basic constitutional issue involved.

"The Senate, sitting as an impeachment court, must proceed with its mandate in trying impeachment cases without fear of another Edsa uprising," said Pimentel, who, along with Davide, co-presided the aborted impeachment trial of then President Joseph Estrada in 2000.

At a press conference, Pimentel insisted that because the impeachment process was a political act it should be settled politically.

Should the Supreme Court still intervene by declaring the second impeachment complaint unconstitutional, Pimentel predicted that it could invite a "military solution, which is worse than proceeding with impeachment."

Pimentel clarified reports that the country was in a state of a constitutional crisis. "That is not correct at all because if the rule of law—if the Constitution is followed—there will be no constitutional crisis whatsoever. Assuming that the House makes a mistake, the Senate as the impeachment court can correct that mistake.

And if the Senate makes a mistake, the people can sanction it. But if the Supreme Court makes a mistake by grabbing a jurisdiction that does not belong to it, who is going to correct the Supreme Court? he asked.

"That is where the constitutional crisis will arise, and therefore it is an open invitation for a military solution," he said.

The senator said that allowing the Supreme Court justices to settle the constitutional issue, instead of the impeachment court, was "in effect saying that they are the arbiters of what are constitutional matters within the impeachment process, which they are not supposed to do. (Doing so would) mean that the person being charged with culpable violation of the Constitution also has the authority to determine whether or not indeed there was culpable violation of the Constitution."

He believed that the House was bent on not recognizing that Supreme Court decision, "so if that is true, you have the makings of a constitutional crisis."

In a separate comment, which was attached to his motion to intervene, Pimentel asked the Supreme Court to dismiss the petitions for lack of jurisdiction, and to recognize the sole power, authority and jurisdiction of the Senate as the impeachment court to try and decide impeachment cases.

He reminded the high court that it was well within its powers to avert a constitutional crisis by recognizing the authority of the impeachment court over the issues posed by the six petitions.

Act of courtesy

In his statement after signing the manifestation, De Venecia made it clear that the comment was filed with the Supreme Court as an "act of courtesy" of the House to a coequal body under the Constitution, and should not be construed as submission to the court's jurisdiction.

He said the court could not exercise the power of judicial review in an impeachment case because the proceeding should be left solely to the jurisdiction and discretion of Congress.

"An impeachment proceeding is a political action to dispense political justice concerning a nonjusticiable issue, solely reserved to the legislature by the sovereign will," De Venecia said.

According to de Venecia, the framers of the Constitution carefully and meticulously delineated powers among the three principal branches of government and installed a system of checks and balances, to prevent abuse or arbitrariness.

He said a special feature of the system was the impeachment process as the only legal means to remove high officials from office, namely the President, Vice President, Chief Justice and other members of the Supreme Court, members of the constitutional commissions, and the Ombudsman.

The Constitution specifically defined stages in the impeachment process: the filing of the complaint by any member of the House or any citizen upon a resolution of endorsement by any member thereof; initiation of the case by the House; the transmittal of the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate; and trial by the Senate.

The Constitution also provides for the specific use of the term "file" in relation to the complaint of a member of the House or any citizen, and the term "initiate" in connection with the exclusive power of the House to initiate a case.

He explained that the first case of impeachment was filed by former President Joseph Estrada against Davide and seven other justices of the Supreme Court for legitimizing the presidency of President Macapagal-Arroyo, while the other was initiated by one-third of the members of the House.

The Speaker said that the Estrada complaint did not reach first base and was never initiated by the House, and that the committee report had yet to be filed and acted upon by the House.

He said petitioners erroneously considered the other complaint, which was officially initiated by one-third of House members, as the second complaint.

"This is the only rational and reasonable interpretation that can be given to the above-quoted provisions. Otherwise, this extraordinary remedy of impeachment will never be effectively carried out because impeachable officials can conveniently allow or manipulate the filing of bogus complaints against them every year to foreclose this remedy," De Venecia said. *With a report from Cynthia D. Balana*

A TIME TO REFLECT
Part 5

A call for sobriety and statesmanship

The country is in a full-blown economic, political, and constitutional crisis which threatens the very life of our democracy and the livelihood of our people.

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The leaders should set aside *amor propio*, legal technicalities, and vested selfish interest, if any. They must act now for the sake of the nation which they are sworn to serve.

The impeachment charge must be withdrawn and referred back to the House Judiciary Committee or the appropriate House Committee. This is to ensure that any deficiency in President Marcos's PD 1949, which created the Judiciary Development Fund, be corrected thru legislation. Such amendment should enhance the fiscal autonomy of the Judiciary.

Local and particularly foreign investors are extremely concerned about the recent turn of events which has had adverse effects on the economy.

The stalemate should end. Any other option will only deepen the crisis.

Our leaders must act before Congress resumes session on November 10. There is no more time. The people want action. And they want it now.

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PCGG seeks re-freeze order on San Miguel shares

By Armand N. Nocum

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government yesterday asked the Sandiganbayan to reinstate the writs of sequestration over the 20 percent San Miguel Corp. stake being claimed by businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr., saying the anti-graft earlier ruling lifting the freeze order on the contested shares was "premature."

In a 16-page motion for reconsideration filed before First Division of the Sandiganbayan, the PCGG also asked the anti-graft court to take custody of the disputed shares, citing the ruling of the Supreme Court in the case of Republic vs. Sandiganbayan (First Division) "to protect the interest of the people."

"This honorable court may issue a writ of sequestration on the subject SMC shares for the purpose of preventing the destruction, concealment or dissipation of, and otherwise, conserving and preserving, the same—until the honorable court makes a final declaration that the subject SMC shares were in truth ill-gotten," the PCGG said in a motion filed through the Office of the Solicitor General.

The PCGG filed the motion for reconsideration in response to the Sandiganbayan's ruling issued last Sept. 17, nullifying the nine sequestration writs that it issued over Cojuangco's 20 percent stake in the food and beverage giant.

The government earlier used the writs to get hold of Cojuangco's shares.

In its appeal, the PCGG said the anti-graft court's resolution was "premature, if not misplaced, as the determination of legitimate ownership over the disputed shares have taken precedence."

The OSG cited the dissenting opinion of First Division Chair Associate Justice Teresita Leonardo de Castro, who said that there exists a "prima facie evidence to justify the sequestration."

Likewise, the OSG invoked the final ruling of the high tribunal in the 1995 case of Republic vs. Sandiganbayan (First Division) where the Supreme Court declared that "there is prima facie evidence to support the sequestration of defendant corporations formed by Cojuangco."

The OSG noted the SC ruling was based on Cojuangco and the corporate defendant's "pre-trial briefs" where they admitted the disputed SMC shares were paid for with loans from the United Coconut Planters Bank and the Coconut Industry Investment Fund Oil Mills—at the time Cojuangco was CEO of the bank and director of the CIIF Oil Mills.

Ganzon laid to rest early to avoid trouble

ILOILO CITY—The children of former Sen. Rodolfo Ganzon buried their father yesterday ahead of schedule, before even President Macapagal-Arroyo could pay her last respects.

Ganzon, who died on Oct. 29 after a lingering illness, was laid to rest amid tight security in the family mausoleum at the Molo Catholic Cemetery here at about 1:30 p.m. He was 81.

The Ganzons are a house divided between the 10 children of his first marriage and their stepmother of more than 10 years.

Jeffrey, one of the children, said the decision was made after "our family" received reports that his father's second wife Rona was set to file an injunction to stop the burial and claim the body.

Rona denied this, saying she wanted "honor, dignity and respect" for her husband till the end.

The President was scheduled to arrive on Nov. 5 to attend the funeral.

Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Trenas said he was informed of the advanced burial only in the morning. The earlier arrangement was for the remains to lie in state at city hall.

At noon yesterday, Rona attended a requiem mass at Tanza Church, a kilometer from the cemetery. She had a huge portrait of her husband mounted near the altar.

Ganzon married Rona in civil rites in 1991, two years after he lost his first wife, Dolores Padoginog. In 1996, they were married in church.

Two wakes were held—one at the ancestral home, the other at Rona's house just a stone's throw away.

Before the interment, Freeman Ganzon turned down anew his stepmother's request for a last look at her husband. *Ma. Diosa Labiste and Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau*

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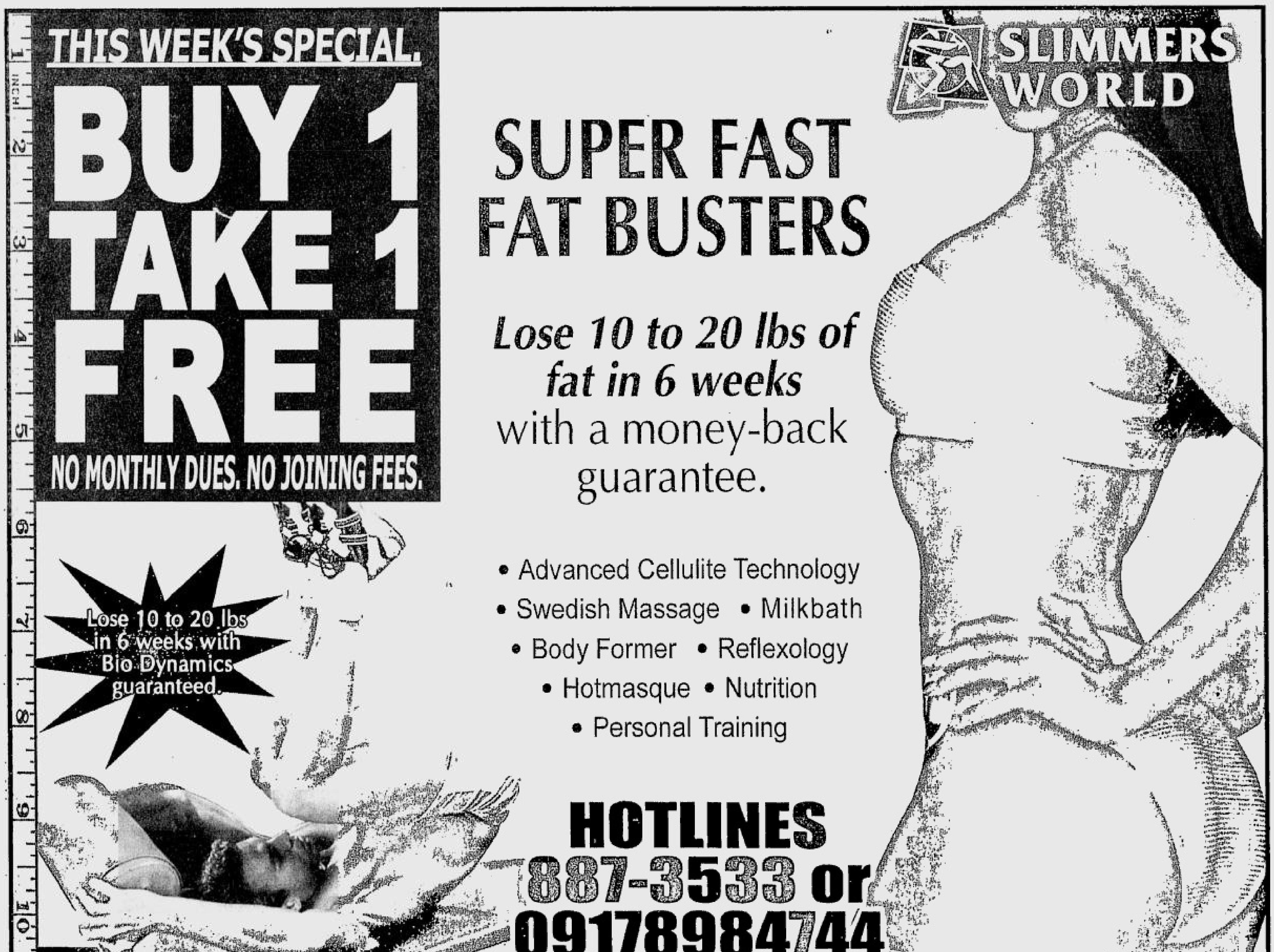
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El Shaddai to pray for end to political crisis

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE CATHOLIC charismatic group El Shaddai yesterday stepped into the row between the Supreme Court and the House of Representatives, saying it had had enough of the political discussions and needed to do something about threats to democracy in the country.

El Shaddai, which boasts of eight million members in the country, said it would hold a people power prayer initiative at the Luneta Grandstand in Manila on Saturday and Sunday to call for an end to the conflict between the two institutions.

El Shaddai leader Mike Velarde, however, stressed that the group would "remain neutral" on the issue and would simply seek a meeting point so that the squabbling institutions could end the impasse.

Velarde's son, Rene, of the party list Buhay was one of the 88 signatories to the impeachment complaint filed in the House of Representatives against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

"This prayer rally may not be the first (and last). We plan to hold a series of prayer rallies until they find a solution to this... otherwise this will be some kind of crisis,' Velarde said at a press conference at the El Shaddai offices in Makati.

He further said that he would conduct "private talks" with congressmen and Davide this week.

Velarde said that he had been meeting with Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and some members of Congress to ask them to "move slowly on the impeachment by looking into possible solutions."

Velarde said that he would also seek an audience with Davide and "request him to respect the independence of the House of Representatives.

"We have to find a solution that will not destroy both institutions... We need to look into the issues and talk to them, to plan possible meeting points," he said.

Velarde extended his invitation to President Macapagal-Arroyo and other leaders to attend the prayer rally and listen to the people's sentiments.

The catch: Velarde has also invited former President Joseph Estrada to join the prayer initiative.

He said that his legal team will ask the Sandiganbayan to allow Estrada "temporary liberty" so he could attend the rally. Velarde supports Estrada's request to have surgery in the United States.

"We will ask the government to consider temporary liberty for him to be able to initiate the healing process before the campaign starts for the 2004 elections, because the ex-President still has a mass following," Velarde said.

But Fr. Romeo Intengan, provincial superior of the Society of Jesus, warned El Shaddai to do everything within legal boundaries.

"There's a thin line between reconciliation and arbitrariness so Bro. Mike should have to consult legal experts," said Intengan, who was also present during the El Shaddai media briefing.

The Jesuit priest said the Catholic Church was hoping for an immediate solution to the impasse because it may give the international community the impression of the "ungovernability and instability" of the Philippines.

Velarde urged other religious groups to join the people power prayer initiative.

Cebu solon barraged by hate text over Davide stand

From page A1

signed the impeachment complaint.

Lawyer Gonzalo Malig-on, spokesperson for Ruiz, said several persons had called up her house and office to criticize her.

One text message, however, hurt her family the most—that she was paid P5 million by businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. Cojuangco is the founding chair of the Nationalist People's Coalition to which Ruiz belongs. Another NPC member in Cebu, Rep. Joseph Ace Durano of the fifth district, is also a signatory to the impeachment complaint.

More Cebuanos are showing their support for Davide, with the University of the Philippines Law Alumni Cebu Foundation Inc. filing a petition for injunction asking the Supreme Court to stop the impeachment complaint.

Eleven board members of the alumni association signed the petition filed against the more than 80 House members who signed the complaint, and against Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., Senate President Franklin Drilon and the House of Representatives as a whole.

The alumni association also asked the Supreme Court to punish the congressmen for violating the tribunal's status quo order.

Instead of complying with the status quo order, the petition said the House, through De Venecia, made public pronouncements that it would defy the order and forward the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate.

"Such acts of the respondents in defying the honorable court's order constitute indirect contempt of this honorable court, and constitute an improper and contumacious conduct tending to directly or indirectly impede, obstruct and degrade the administration of justice," the petition said.

The petition said that the second impeachment complaint violated the Constitution and that the House had no authority to interfere in fiscal matters of the judiciary, specifically in the disbursement of the Judiciary Development Fund (JDF), the petition said.

While Congress holds the power of the purse, it may not interfere with the use of the judiciary's resources without defeating the fiscal autonomy of the judiciary, which is enshrined in the Constitution.

Representatives Ruiz and Durano earlier said they signed the impeachment complaint to give Davide a venue to explain his side on the allegation that he misused the JDF.

SOON-RUIZ: Feeling the heat of the Cebuanos' fury.

Malig-on said the accusations and criticism against Ruiz were unfair. But, he said, Ruiz remained hopeful that the Cebuanos would eventually understand her position.

Malig-on asked Davide supporters not to pursue their plans to stage a rally in front of the Ruiz house in Mandaue City.

A rally, he said, might traumatize the legislator's young children.

Shoot anybody

He did not confirm radio reports that Ruiz's husband, Lito, had warned he would shoot anybody who staged a rally in front of their house.

Malig-on said Ruiz might withdraw her signature if she is presented with a new report from the Commission on Audit clearing Davide.

In Mindanao, the National Democratic Front said the impeachment case was nothing but "a conspiracy against the people."

NDF spokesperson for Mindanao Jorge Madlos, alias Ka Oris, said some lawmakers had colluded to protect their class interest and spoil the gains of the people's struggle.

"The Davide impeachment plot is just part of a wider conspiracy of the ruling clique against the people. GMA (the President) herself made a secret deal for Eduardo Cojuangco to regain control of San Miguel Corp. at the expense of the people's fight to recover ill-gotten wealth, in exchange for Cojuangco's withdrawal from the presidential race," Madlos said.

He also scored the Supreme Court for its "long tradition of defending the interest of the reactionary class," but he noted that were instances when it "made decisions favorable to the people when confronted by strong people's protest." *With a report from Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, November 4, 2003
31st Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading:	Rom 12:5-16
Gospel:	Lk 14:15-24

One of the guests at a party said to Jesus, "Happy are those who eat at the banquet in the kingdom of God!"

Jesus replied, "A man once gave a feast and invited many guests. When it was time for the feast he sent his servant to tell those he had invited to come, for everything was ready. But all alike began to make excuses. The first said: 'Please excuse me. I must go and see the piece of land I have just bought.' Another said: 'I am sorry, but I am on my way to try out the five yoke of oxen I have just bought.' Still another said, 'How can I come when I just got married?'

"The servant returned alone and reported this to his master. Upon hearing the account, the master of the house flew into a rage and ordered his servant: 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.'

"The servant reported after a while: 'Sir, your orders have been carried out, but there is still room.' The master said: 'Go out to the highways and country lanes and force people to come in, to make sure my house is full. I tell you, none of those invited will have a morsel of my feast."

Commentary

"Let love be sincere. Hate is evil and holds to whatever is good." September 11, 2001 will always be remembered in the United States and the rest of the world. Four commercial planes were hijacked, two crashed at the World Trade Center Twin Towers, one was crashed at Pentagon and the fourth plane crashed at a forest site in Pennsylvania. No estimate yet of the casualties but many fear that it will be into several thousands. Some economists fear that it may lead to global recession and lead to much suffering in many third world countries. The general reaction is one of great sadness but also of quiet anger against the terrorists. Many are calling for revenge, to strike down known terrorists groups and nations providing help to these groups. But someone said that we should be careful that we do not go to the same level as the terrorists. There is a higher moral ground we should preserve: hate what is evil and hold past to what is good. Terrorism is evil and we should hate it, but we should hold past to what is good. Revenge is never a good choice, but justice is good and justice we must uphold.

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Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORA
Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City

October 1, 2003

PHILHEALTH CIRCULAR
No. 33 , s-2003

TO : ALL ACCREDITED HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS, CLAIMS PROCESSING DEPARTMENTS - NATIONALCAPITAL REGION AND PHILHEALTH REGIONAL

SUBJECT : Extension of Effectivity of Ketorolac in the PhilHealth List of Reimbursable Drugs (Positive List)

The compensability of the ketorolac trometamol 30mg/mL ampule as provided for in PhilHealth Circular No. 28, s-2002 dated September 2, 2002 is hereby extended until the end of the year. Claims for this drug will be reimbursed only when used for short-term management of acute peri-operative pain.

This circular shall take effect on all claims with admission dates starting October 1, 2003 to December 31, 2003.

All other provisions consistent with this circular remain in full force and effect.

(Sgd.) LORNA O. FAJARDO, CESO III
OIC, Chief Operating Officer
OIC, Office of the President

AFP, Malaysia hope 5 hostages alive

From page A1

said. .

Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko, chief of the Southern Command, said further interrogation of Malaysian Nonoy Arcosil indicated that his fellow hostages—his parents, a Filipino woman and two Indonesian men—were still alive. Gunmen in a speedboat seized the six hostages from the Borneo Paradise Resort on Oct, 5

Earlier statement

Arcosil, 19, earlier claimed that Abu Sayyaf bandits shot and killed his fellow hostages on the afternoon of Oct. 27 on Languyan Island, about five hours by boat from the Tawi-Tawi capital of Bongao, after the Malaysian government and the resort owner refused to pay the ransom demand of 5 million ringgit (US$1.3 million).

Arcosil said only he managed to run away when the shooting began. He was later found by villagers clad only in his underwear and turned over to authorities.

"He has retracted all his earlier (statements)... Now I am optimistic that the Sabah hostages are still alive," Kyamko told the INQUIRER.

He said Arcosil's earlier statements were being "double-checked" by troops in the field.

"Earlier, he (Arcosil) claimed the cadavers were left at Panglima Sugala after the supposed execution, but after a week's intensified search, our troops didn't see any indication of massacre or execution," the Southcom chief added.

Motives unclear

It wasn't clear what Arcosil's motives were when he made those supposedly misleading statements.

Whatever, Kyamko said he had sent more Marines and soldiers to Tawi-Tawi to join the search for the five hostages.

In Camp Aguinaldo, a top Armed Forces official also said that the five people snatched from a Malaysian resort were still alive and that efforts to find them were continuing.

"Since we did not find any bodies, it would mean that the five would still be somewhere there," AFP Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia said. "That is what we are now focusing our efforts on."

Not exactly true

Garcia said in a television interview that Arcosil had admitted that his earlier statements were "not exactly true."

Malaysian Defense Minister Najib Razak also questioned Arcosil's account.

"We are relying on information from the Philippine military; so far the reports received are vague and unclear," Najib was quoted as saying by the Bernama national news agency.

"As long as there are no bodies, we cannot conclude that they have died and we hope the Philippine military would do something to rescue them," he was quoted as saying.

Malaysia earlier refused to acknowledge that the hostages may be in the Philippines. Fearing damage to its tourism industry, Malaysia has also played down the possibility that Abu Sayyaf bandits had carried out the abduction.

Photo of Andang

The Abu Sayyaf, which has been linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida, launched boat raids on Malaysian resorts twice in 2000, kidnapping foreign tourists and collecting huge ransoms.

After he was turned over to authorities last week, Arcosil was shown photos of Abu bandits. He identified the leader of the kidnappers as Galib Andang, alias Commander Robot, head of a Sulu-based Abu Sayyaf faction.

When Arcosil was brought to the Southern Command headquarters in Zamboanga City for further interrogation, however, he retracted his previous claims.

Kyamko said Arcosil "denied that the kidnapping was perpetrated by the Abu Sayyaf."

"And when he reviewed the pictures, he did not recognize even one of the Abu Sayyaf (members) there," the Southcom chief added.

With reports from AP

THE WAY of Mawanay and Mahusay: Indonesian Nonoy Arkusil recants story on massacre of hostages from Sabah allegedly by their captors. AFP PHOTO

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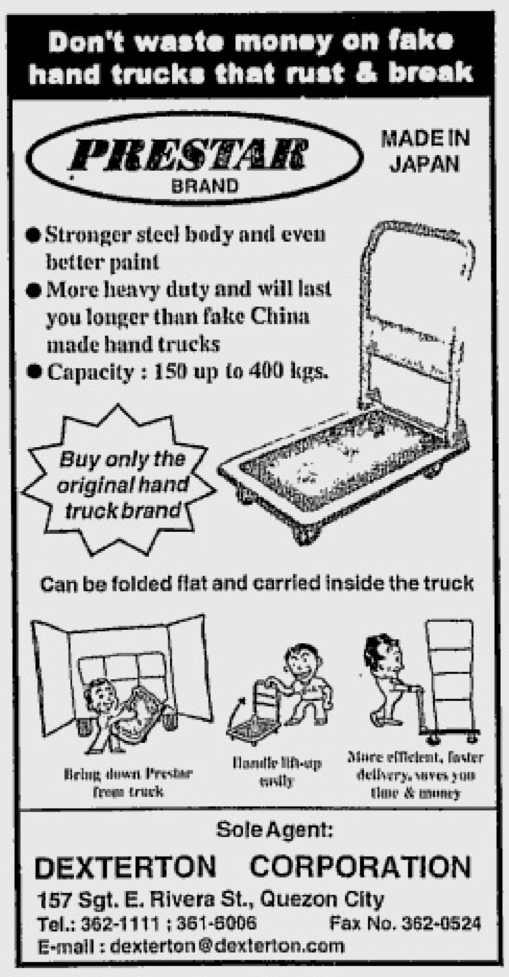
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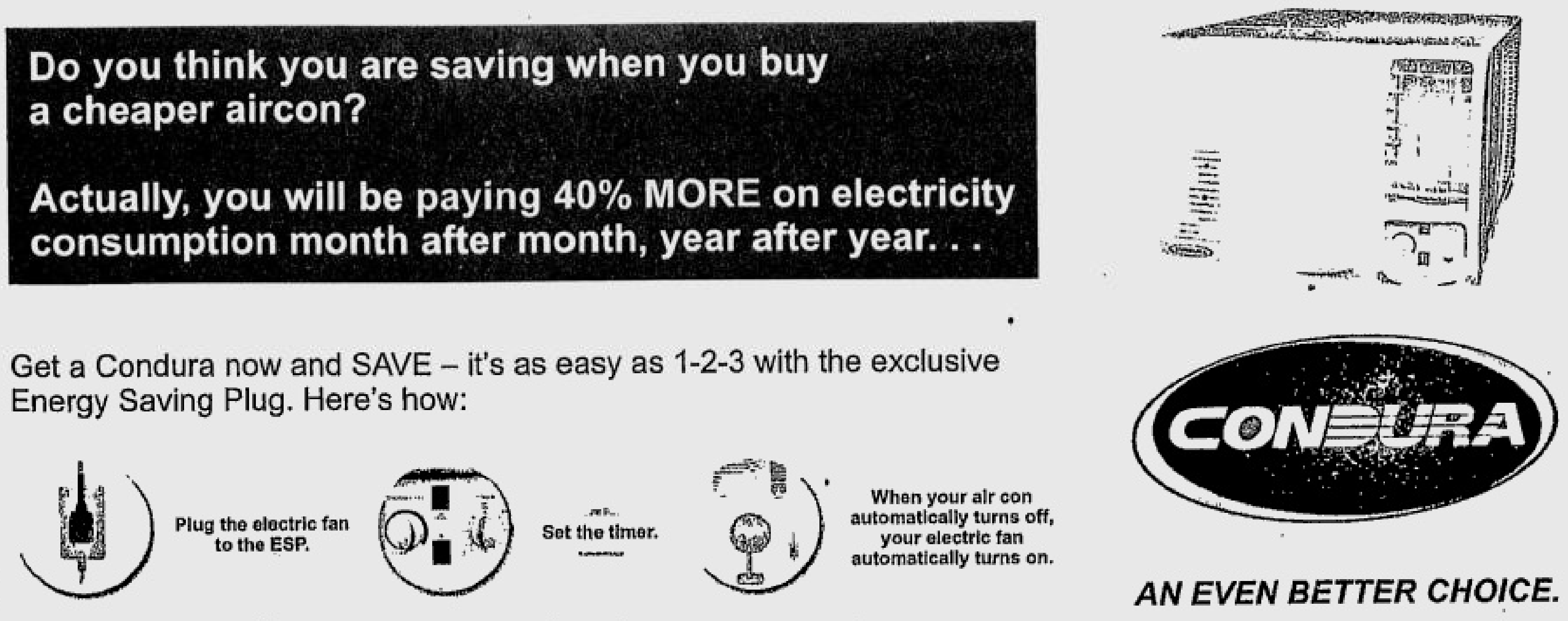
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NPC threatens De Venecia

From page A1

transpired in the House, adding that less drastic measures to press the Speaker were already being implemented.

He said pro-impeachment congressmen had a countermove to thwart De Venecia's move asking Lakas members to withdraw their signatures from the complaint.

Fuentebella said his group was confident its present campaign to push through with the impeachment would gain more supporters by the time Congress resumes sessions on Nov. 10. But he did not cite any figures.

De Venecia, reached for comment, emphasized the consensus the House leaders had reached last week. "There was a decision taken by a multi-party caucus to transmit the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate on Nov. 10 so as of now the decision stands."

But presidential adviser Heherson Alvarez claimed the impeachment drive was already losing steam after 12 congressmen reportedly decided to withdraw their signatures within the week.

He declined to name all of them, but identified Rep. Leovigildo Banaag of Agusan del Norte, of LDP-NPC, as having withdrawn his signature yesterday.

Five-point formula

Jaraula said he had discussed his five-point formula with all parties concerned.

"I've gotten positive responses," he noted.

Jaraula's proposal involves the following:

- For Davide to have his son Bryan resign as vice chair of the Supreme Court's bid and award committee and chair of the Committee on the Halls of Justice.
- For Davide to open the Judiciary Development Fund accounts to a "review by Congress in the exercise of its constitutional oversight powers."
- For Congress to "suspend transmittal of the Articles of Impeachment against Davide to the Senate, and task the House committee on justice to continue its review of the JDF."
- For SC justices, "being impeachable officials themselves, (to) observe the moral compulsion not to assume jurisdiction over the highly political matter of impeachment… and leave the issue to the Senate when it convenes as an impeachment court."
- For President Macapagal-Arroyo to "exercise her moral ascendancy as the highest official of the Republic… over the Supreme Court and Congress, and lead both to her principled solution" of the crisis.

On Bryan Davide's resignation, Jaraula said this "gesture will be taken in good faith and humility, and not as an admission of any wrongdoing."

Escudero welcomed the Jaraula proposal as worth considering: "Well-taken. We should explore this. We should not be constrained by legalities."

Abad, who is the president of the Liberal Party, said he welcomed the use of the phrase "principled solution" instead of "settlement."

"Settlement connotes compromise and concessions," Abad said.

He noted his concerns over the way Jaraula phrased his five-point formula. He said the Bryan Davide resignation "will have to be a personal decision of the Chief Justice."

Abad agreed with Jaraula that the House committee on justice should resume its probe into the JDF, but he disagreed that the House shall suspend the transmittal of the Articles of Impeachment.

Abad said the "most expeditious way" was for congressmen to withdraw their signatures.

On the proposal for the high court to keep off the impeachment controversy, Abad said that the tribunal may be accused of dereliction of duty if it did not deal with the six petitions pending before it.

Two-point formula

Another staunch anti-impeachment solon, Rosales, had a one-word reaction to Jaraula's proposal. "Beautiful," she said.

Rosales said the formula could be reduced to two basic approaches, which is for the House to suspend transmittal of the Articles of Impeachment, and for the chamber to exercise its oversight functions over the JDF.

"We must suspend the transmittal of an inconclusive and controversial impeachment complaint that has divided, more than consolidated, the members of the House on its relevance, validity and propriety," Rosales said.

"In the meantime, let us exercise our oversight functions and await the final report of the (House) committee on justice on the JDF within the parameters and constraints defined by the Constitution," she added.

Rep. Prospero Nograles (Lakas, Davao City) had a similar two-point formula: for Davide to recognize the oversight power of Congress to review JDF disbursements, and for the House to withdraw the impeachment complaint and resume the JDF review at the committee level.

"Let's be less legal," Nograles said. "There's no need for everybody to fight this out."

Asked for comment on the Jaraula formula, Nograles said: "Anything that will be acceptable to the parties without one losing face is a step forward."

Nograles, who did not sign the impeachment complaint against Davide, said: "We need more humility and less confrontation and let us be prepared to make personal sacrifices to avert a constitutional crisis."

Main issue

Fuentebella said the impeachment case had become so politically charged that it has obscured the more important issue, which is alleged graft and corruption.

Fuentebella said Lakas congressmen were being made to close their eyes to the issue of alleged misspending of the JDF.

"All we want is full disclosure and transparency of the JDF to maintain the integrity of the judiciary and the highest tribunal," Fuentebella said.

The three Isabela representatives who signed the impeachment complaint vowed not to withdraw their signatures.

Rep. Rodolfo Albano Jr., a member of Lakas, said he would not allow "night crawlers" or Lakas emissaries tasked with convincing congressmen to withdraw their signatures, to approach him.

Two other Isabela representatives, Faustino Dy III and Giorgidi Aggabao, both members of the Nationalist People's Coalition, said they would stick to their decision to endorse the complaint.

Dy said he signed the complaint because he believed that it had merit. Aggabao, a lawyer, said he would turn Lakas emissaries down.

Rep. Edwin Uy, the only Isabela representative who did not sign the impeachment complaint, assailed his colleagues for pushing a case "lacking in substance and technically insufficient."

"That complaint is unconstitutional. The law provides that there should be no second impeachment complaint. Besides, there are no impeachable offenses on the complaint against the Chief Justice," Uy, also a lawyer, said.

In Ilocos Sur, Rep. Eric Singson, president of the 29-member Northern Luzon Alliance, said his group had no common position on the impeachment complaint.

"We are on our own on this issue," said Singson, who signed the complaint.

Singson, a member of the Liberal Party, said no amount of convincing could make him withdraw his signature because he signed it according to his conscience.

Palace hopes

But Malacañang officials expressed the hope that more congressmen would withdraw their signatures from the impeachment complaint, and said the President has taken "some concrete steps" to avert a constitutional crisis.

Flip-flopping between her earlier neutral and "middle force" postures, Ms Macapagal yesterday said a political threshold had been crossed, forcing her to intervene.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said Ms Macapagal has taken "concrete steps" to end the impasse and she is optimistic that this solution would happen very soon.

"The President was very upbeat this morning," Bunye said, saying her optimism on the resolution of the crisis was 8 on a scale of 1 to 10.

The President herself addressed the issue, in a speech at the 105th anniversary of the Philippine Postal Authority.

"I have prayed very hard about the impeachment controversy and I have consulted deeply with leaders from the great institutions and various sectors," she said.

"There is a growing consensus that we have crossed a political threshold to the point wherein the President must step in and forge a principled solution to the impasse," she said.

Leading the campaign to pressure congressmen into withdrawing their signatures, Alvarez claimed that the proponents of impeachment, particularly those from the NPC, no longer had the numbers to move for its transmittal to the Senate.

"With 12 Lakas congressmen now withdrawing their signatures, the impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide is effectively defeated," Alvarez said.

Alvarez said the campaign to withdraw signatures was being undertaken by his group with the consent of the party leadership.

He said that Ms Macapagal, who is also the Lakas chair, had already made public her sympathy for Davide.

"I am moving with the consent of party leaders because we believe that there was no basis to charge Davide."

Other Lakas congressmen put the blame on Gabriel Claudio, the presidential legislative liaison officer, for failing to detect the signature campaign of pro-impeachment congressmen.

They noted that the "house-to-house" campaign by the proponents of the second impeachment complaint came shortly after the state visit here of US President George W. Bush.

"In fact, many heard an angry Rep. Ace Barbers and his group putting the blame on Claudio shortly after the 76 signatures were mustered by the NPC led by Representatives Gilbert Teodoro and Wimpy Fuentebella," one congressman noted. *With reports from Cynthia Balana, Juliet Javellana; Villamor Visaya Jr. and Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

OSG: Impeachment rap vs Davide illegal

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE OFFICE of the Solicitor General yesterday said that the impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. was unconstitutional.

It maintained that the Supreme Court had the power to review the constitutionality of the acts of Congress, including the power to order the House of Representatives to drop the impeachment complaint against Davide. The House, however, insisted that the SC had no jurisdiction over Davide's impeachment.

The OSG and the House filed with the tribunal yesterday their comments after several groups, including congressmen, questioned the constitutionality of the second impeachment complaint against Davide.

In his 31-page comment, Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo said the complaint against the Chief Justice violated the constitutional prohibition against the initiation of impeachment proceedings against an impeachable official within a one-year period.

He said that the prospect of a full-blown constitutional crisis should not deter the tribunal from ruling on the matter.

"That a constitutional crisis may occur is not a reason for this Honorable Court to refrain from upholding the Constitution in all impeachment cases. The Justices of this Honorable Court cannot abandon their constitutional duties because their action may start, if not precipitate, a crisis," Benipayo said.

He said that the House "apparently" violated this constitutional provision when it changed its rules on impeachment. The new rules say that an impeachment complaint is considered initiated only after the House committee on justice acts on it.

Proponents of Davide's impeachment claim that under these new rules, the first impeachment filed by former President Joseph Estrada should not count because the committee on justice voted it down.

"The long and short of it is that the complainants in the second impeachment complaint do not count the first impeachment complaint as an 'initiated' complaint on the ground that the (House) committee on justice had found the complaint to be insufficient in substance. This argument is sophistry," Benipayo said.

"The law is clear. An action is initiated by the filing of a complaint in the proper tribunal. In the cases at bar, the first impeachment complaint was filed in the (House), in the same manner as the second impeachment complaint," he said.

Benipayo reviewed the records of the 1986 Constitutional Commission, which, he said, "clearly" showed that an impeachment complaint was deemed to be initiated once it was filed in Congress.

"(The congressmen who signed the complaint) cannot find solace in the power of Congress 'to promulgate its rules of impeachment to effectively carry out the purpose' (of the constitutional provision on impeachment). Where the construction to be given to a House rule affects persons other than members of the House of Representatives, the question becomes judicial in nature," Benipayo said.

"The cases at bar involve the right of a third party—the Chief Justice—whose plea for legislative restraint was rejected by the House. What is more, these cases involve an infringement of a specific constitutional limitation," he said.

GMA asks for divine …

From page A1

Congress resumes sessions and the House takes up the issue of whether to transmit the impeachment complaint filed against Davide to the Senate.

In one prayer, the President interjected: "God our Father will be glorified eight days from today when Congress resumes its session."

After initially distancing herself from the Davide impeachment controversy, Ms Macapagal has since stepped into the fray. She has backed Speaker Jose de Venecia's strategy of wooing fellow Lakas-CMD members to withdraw their signatures from the impeachment complaint.

Explaining the President's recourse to prayer, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said Ms Macapagal was basically a "religious person," which was why she was turning to prayers for help.

In a speech later in the day, Ms Macapagal said moves to divide the nation would fail because the people want unity and they were tired of infighting.

"There is no doubt that there are continuous efforts to sow divisiveness in our nation. But they will fail because the people are tired of infighting. The people want unity and reconciliation," Ms Macapagal said during the 105th Postal Anniversary and Postal Consciousness Week.

"We have the support of the people in seeking unity and reconciliation. If you and I are united in this goal, there is no turning back from the tide of positive change—in the powerful institutions of our country, in the bureaucracy and the entire nation," the President said.

AFP puts troops on nationwide alert

From page A1

head of the directorate for operations, later explained that the training was part of the PNP's "standard operating procedures in case of any contingency."

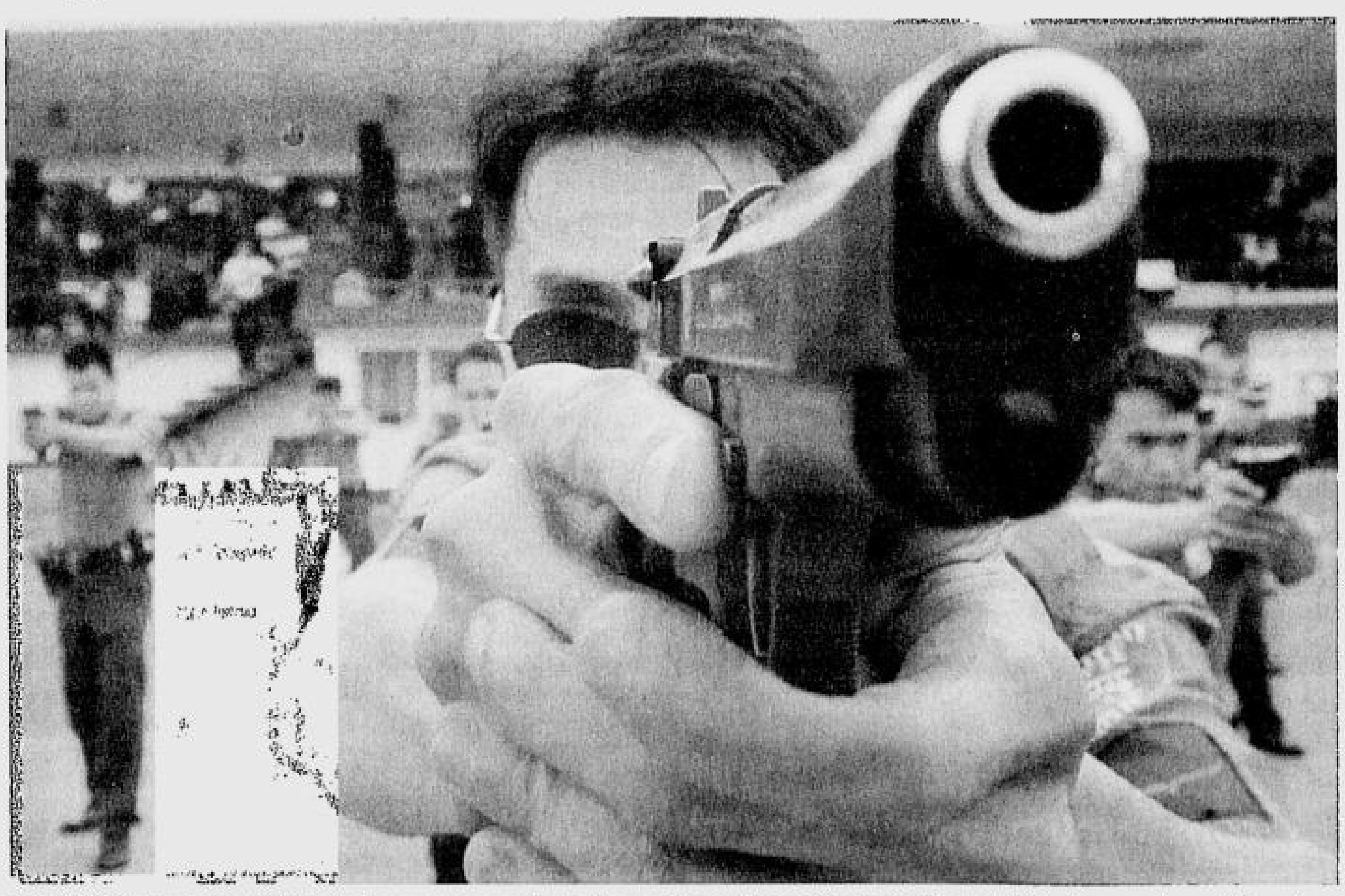
"If you've noticed, there have been mass actions because of the Davide issue," said Director Ricardo de Leon, PNP spokesperson and chief of the directorial staff. "We should be ready to maintain peace and order at all times."

PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. said he and his men had not monitored any police or military activity meant to destabilize the government.

Director Jose Lalisan Jr., chief of the PNP directorate for personnel records management, assured the public that no uprising would come from police ranks because the "legitimate grievances of our personnel are being properly addressed."

The military has received information that some groups would stage a series of rallies starting tomorrow, but it has not established if these groups include an armed component.

"So far we haven't monitored any armed group, if you are centering your question on any member of the AFP. We can assure the public that no member of the AFP will join any destabilization move if there are," Lucero said.



POLICEMEN undergo training in close range combat at Camp Crame. They were part of some 400 policemen from different police units who arrived at the PNP headquarters yesterday.

JOAN BONDOC

Just rumors

Lucero stressed that rumors about "unusual troop movement" and recruitment of military personnel for a destabilization attempt remained just that: rumors.

"We would like to request those groups that are spreading these rumors to please refrain from spreading this information because this information has no basis and they are just doing a disservice to the Filipino nation because this is creating undue alarm to the public," he said.

A senior military official said rumors about purported movements of some troops on the ground were part of black propaganda, but could not say which group was behind this.

"There's no reason for anybody to move; we have been implementing reforms in the military and everybody knows that," the official, who asked not to be named, said in a phone interview.

For good measure, the military top brass also disallowed movements by any unit unless approved by the commanding officers.

"The AFP has issued a directive to the field to refrain from making unnecessary movements to prevent doubts. So all movements have to be official," Lucero said.

During the alert period, troops would not be allowed to take leaves of absence and would be on call at their camps.

Lucero assured the public that no soldier "will join any destabilization moves.

He added: "The (military) will be constitutional, we will strictly adhere to the chain of command."

PMA 1989

Meanwhile, members of Philippine Military Academy Class of 1989 came out in the open to deny reports that they had been offered a large sum to take part in a destabilization attempt.

"We vehemently deny any involvement in any coup attempt, more so the changing of hands of any money for the launching of destabilization acts against the present administration," said Supt. Dionisio Borromeo, president of PMA Class of 1989.

"We continue to be professional officers and our principles are not for sale. Being apolitical, we cannot be bought by any reward or promises to that effect," he added, reading from a prepared statement.

Borromeo, who with three other members of the class showed up at the press office in Camp Aguinaldo, maintained that they would never join any act of military adventurism.

"We abide by the Constitution; we will not get involved in any adventurism," he said.

Borromeo admitted that his class has been holding monthly meetings and fellowships to finalize plans for their co-hosting of the PMA foundation day rites in February next year.

"We never touched on the Davide impeachment complaint," he said. *With a report from AFP*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

US mourns deaths but will not retreat

WASHINGTON—The United States, faced with its heaviest losses in Iraq since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in April, vowed Sunday it would not back down in its war on "terrorists."

Officials said the downing of a US military helicopter and the deaths of two civilian contractors would not shake US resolve to win, while also noting the difficulty of stabilizing Iraq as long as Saddam remains a fugitive.

"The terrorists seek to kill coalition forces and innocent Iraqis because they want us to run, but our will and resolve are unshakeable," White House spokesperson Trent Duffy said.

"We will prevail in this critical front in the war on terror because the stakes are too high to do anything less."

Duffy said President George W. Bush, vacationing at his Texas ranch, was informed of the downed helicopter by staff but had no public statement.

Fifteen soldiers were killed and 21 wounded when a US army helicopter was shot down near Fallujah while en route to Baghdad airport, US military officials said. US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said the helicopter, a CH-47 Chinook, likely was brought down by a shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missile.

It was the bloodiest attack on US troops in Iraq since the April 9 fall of Saddam's Baath party regime at the hands of the US-led military coalition.

Another US soldier was killed in a separate bombing in Baghdad, and two US contractors working with the US Army Corps of Engineers later were killed by a roadside bomb in Fallujah, a stronghold of resistance to the US-led occupation.

If confirmed, Sunday's deaths would raise to 138 the number of US troops lost in Iraq since May 1, when Washington declared major combat over, according to an AFP count based on a previous toll provided by the Pentagon.

US officials downplayed the impact of the helicopter attack, which came after a dramatic surge of anti-coalition violence in the past week, including the Oct. 27 car bombing at the International Committee of the Red Cross and other nearly simultaneous attacks around Baghdad that killed 43 people and wounded more than 200.

"In a long, hard war, we're going to have tragic days, as this is. But they're necessary. They're part of a war that's difficult and complicated," Rumsfeld told ABC News.

"We can win this war, we will win this war."

RUMSFELD: "We can win this war, we will win this war." REUTERS

Rumsfeld said the United States had no proof Saddam was masterminding the attacks. US officials also suspect some 100,000 prisoners Saddam released from jail before his capture and fighters from other countries, notably Syria and Lebanon. *AFP*

Chopper attack signals long haul in Iraq

By Charles J. Hanley

BAGHDAD—"As we fight this low-intensity conflict," the American general said, "there will be... more tragedies in the future." Hours later, in the flash of a guerrilla missile, the general had his latest tragedy and the intensity of this American conflict moved up a notch.

The big, lumbering Chinook helicopter that crashed in flames Sunday in the Euphrates River farm country west of Baghdad took with it not just the lives of 15 US soldiers, but also any hopes that the war in Iraq would end anytime soon.

After six months, the anti-US resistance is smarter, more active, more effective. The American command says it sees growing signs of coordinated planning. Signs of its growing boldness are unmistakable.

In little more than a week, in an arc stretching through the guerrilla belt from north of Baghdad to the west, the insurgents have stunned the US occupation army with one blow after another.

On Oct. 25, they brought down a helicopter for the first time in four months, a Black Hawk of the 4th Infantry Division felled by ground fire at Tikrit, hometown of the fugitive ex-president Saddam Hussein.

At sunrise the next day, they battered the occupation's headquarters hotel in Baghdad with a volley of rockets—fired practically from its doorstep—forcing out hundreds of US staff members.

Two days later, an Abrams tank—a 61.9-metric ton symbol of US Army might—was destroyed for the first time during the six-month-old occupation, blown off the road north of Baghdad by an insurgent land mine or makeshift bomb.

On Sunday, a guerrilla gunner—apparently armed with a shoulder-fired, heat-seeking missile and positioned in a date-palm grove—shot the Chinook out the skies, the biggest US military target yet.

The intensity is seen not just in the targets, but in the numbers.

The average number of attacks, around 12 a day in midsummer, reached 33 a day by late October. In seven weeks of war in March and April, 114 Americans were killed in combat. But even more—some 140 US military personnel—have been killed in action since President George W. Bush declared "major combat" ended on May 1.

In Washington, US Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has begun talking of a "long, hard slog" ahead. The rhetoric among the American leadership in Baghdad is hardening, too, as they try to steel the resolve of their Iraqi and coalition allies, of the American public, of the American soldier.

"They believe they can drain the coalition of its will by inflicting a steady stream of casualties. They are wrong," the US occupation chief, L. Paul Bremer, declared at a Baghdad news conference Saturday evening.

At the same session, the overall US commander in Iraq, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, marshaled such words as "difficulty," "sacrifice" and "perseverance" as he spoke of the road ahead.

"Undoubtedly, as we continue to fight this low-intensity conflict, there will be more obstacles, more setbacks, and more tragedies in the future," Sanchez said Saturday.

The very next day was deadlier for US forces than any but one since the fighting in Iraq began.

As they move ahead, Sanchez's aides say, their most urgent need is for intelligence, better, quicker information from cooperative Iraqis about who is organizing the attacks, and where and when.

Right now, Sanchez acknowledged, "I can't give you an answer."

Increasingly, as well, the Baghdad command is pushing to shift the security burden onto Iraqis themselves—police, paramilitary civil defense, urban security guards. Bremer said Saturday he would accelerate their training and deployment. *AP*

Victim of attack heading home for mother's funeral

PITTSBURGH—One of five soldiers killed in the helicopter attack in Iraq was on his way home to attend the funeral of his mother, who died suddenly last week, relatives said.

Ernest Bucklew, 33, was heading home on emergency leave Sunday when the military helicopter carrying him and dozens others was struck by a missile and crashed.

Bucklew was to return to Pennsylvania for the funeral of his mother, Mary Ellen Bucklew, who died while driving home from work Friday when an aneurysm in an artery leading to her heart burst, said the soldier's uncle, Jack Smith.

"Two deaths in three days is hard. I'm scared to death for my brother-in-law," Smith said.

Ernest Bucklew, the son of a coal miner, joined the Army about five years ago and was stationed in Colorado, Smith said.

"His mother and dad prayed every night that he would come home safe," Smith said.

He is survived by his wife, Barbara, and two sons. *AP*

Abdullah vows crackdown on corruption, terrorism

KUALA LUMPUR—In an emotional maiden address to parliament Monday, Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi pledged to crack down on government corruption and abuse of power.

ABDULLAH

While hailing his predecessor Mahathir Mohamad as a "hero," Abdullah took aim at two issues for which Mahathir's administration had been strongly criticized—crony capitalism and the weakening of judicial and legislative independence.

"The public sector shoulders the responsibility of ensuring national policies are implemented effectively and must reflect a clean and incorruptible image," he said.

"Our resolve to have a civil service that is corruption-free should not be weakened by unhealthy practices in the private sector or by parties outside the government that contribute to this disease."

On "checks and balances needed to prevent abuses of power," Abdullah said: "The practice of constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy will continue to be supported and we must respect the separation of powers within the legislature, the executive and the judiciary."

The new premier broke into tears at the end of his address as he called on Allah for guidance and inspiration. He took over Friday from Mahathir, who was also known to weep at emotional moments during his 22 years in power.

Abdullah pledged to uphold democracy, but said there were limits to freedom.

"We believe democracy is the best system of governance. We must be open and ready to accept criticism and contrary views to ensure that a culture of democracy thrives."

However, he said, "democracy does not mean absolute freedom. Issues that inflame religious, racial, and cultural sentiments should not be sensationalized while attempts to undermine national security must be dealt with firmly.

"We cannot compromise when dealing with the threats posed by extremism, terrorism, and militancy."

Malaysia has detained without trial more than 90 alleged Islamic militants in the past two years, many of them accused of membership in the Jemaah Islamiyah terrorist group blamed for a series of deadly bomb attacks in the region.

Abdullah's speech received an immediate, if cautious, welcome from the Chinese-based opposition Democratic Action Party.

"These are things that we have heard before but the significance here is that he is saying all this in his first speech in parliament," secretary-general Kerk Kim Hock said.

"It is a very good start. I don't want to prejudge him but I do believe that there is interest on his part to at least appear to listen to past grouses which people have been making."

Kerk said the question was whether Abdullah had the political strength to carry through his promises, but added: "I believe there will be some differences, like showing more respect for parliament as supreme and not just a rubber stamp."

The hardline Islamic Party, however, dismissed Abdullah's speech as "just rhetoric."

"His speech is a repeat of Mahathir's address 22 years ago when he then became the prime minister," said Mahfuz Omar, a PAS member of parliament. *AFP*

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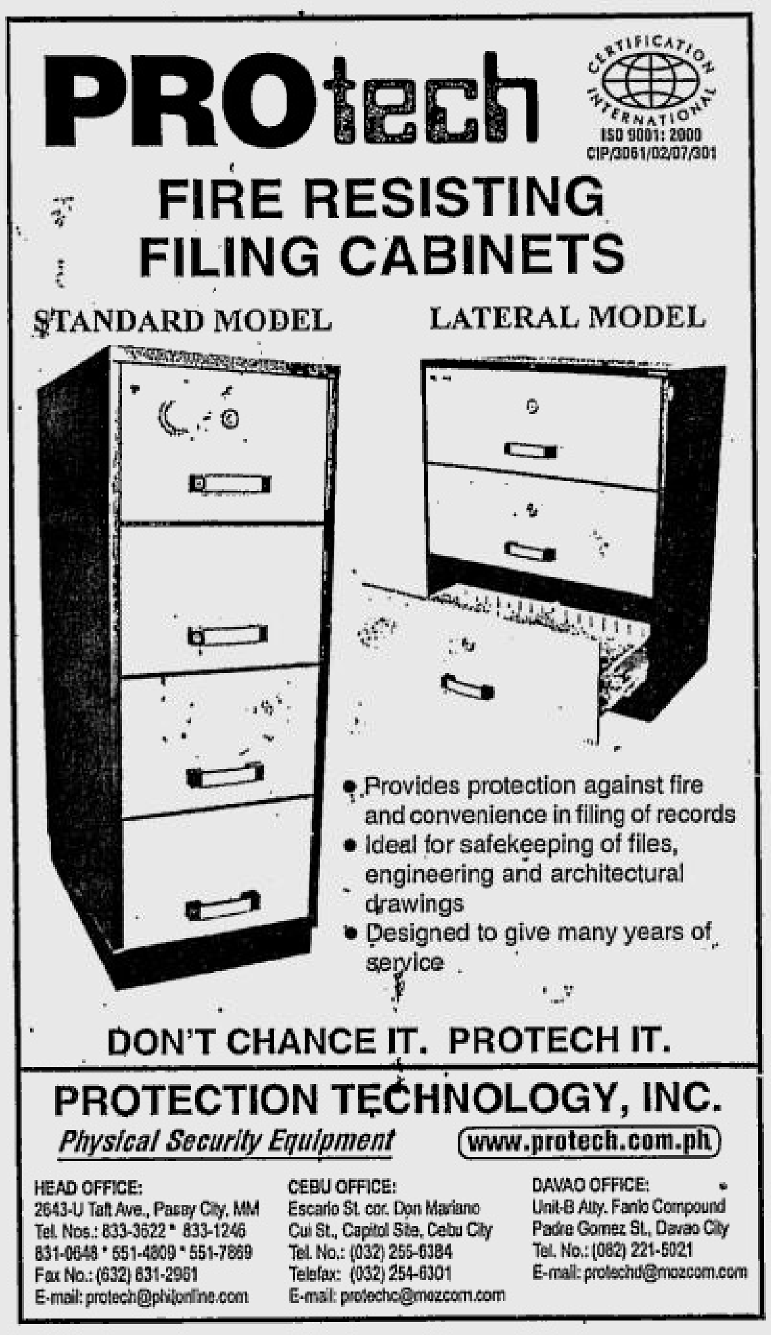

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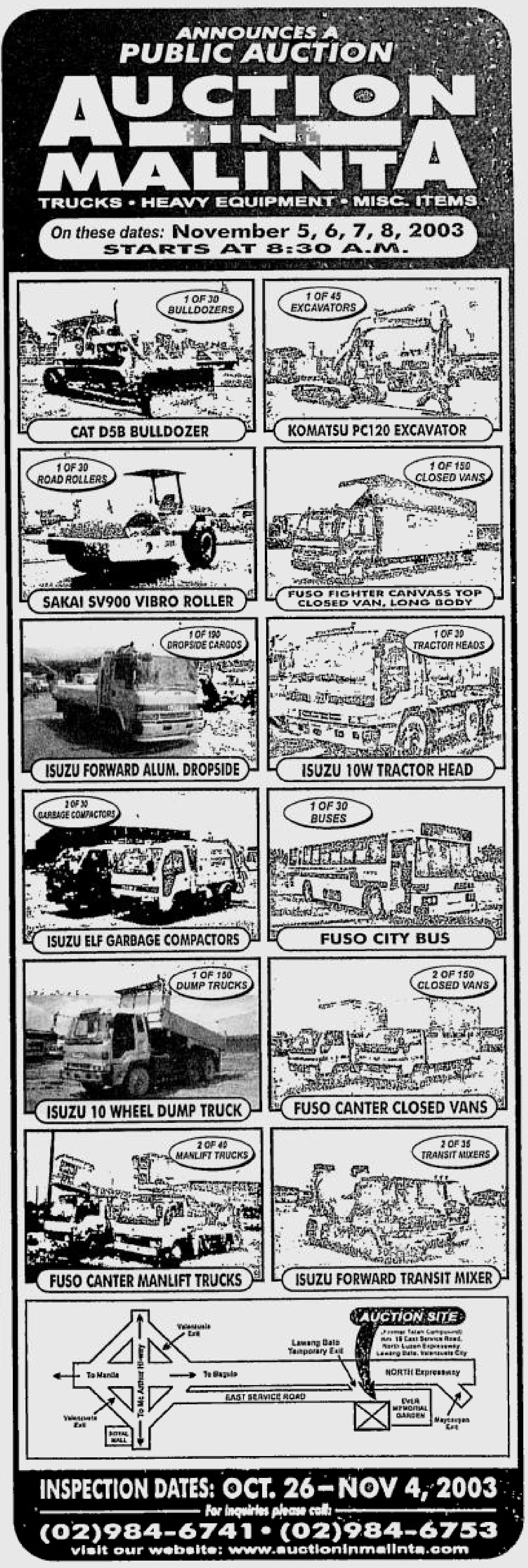

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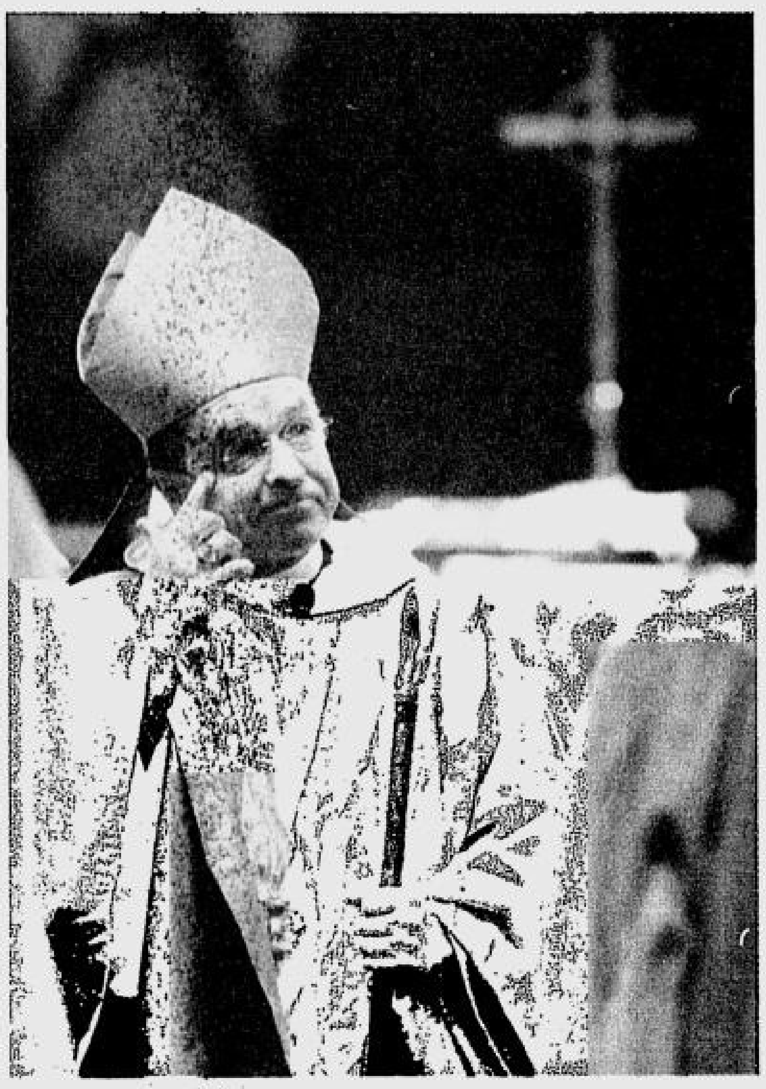

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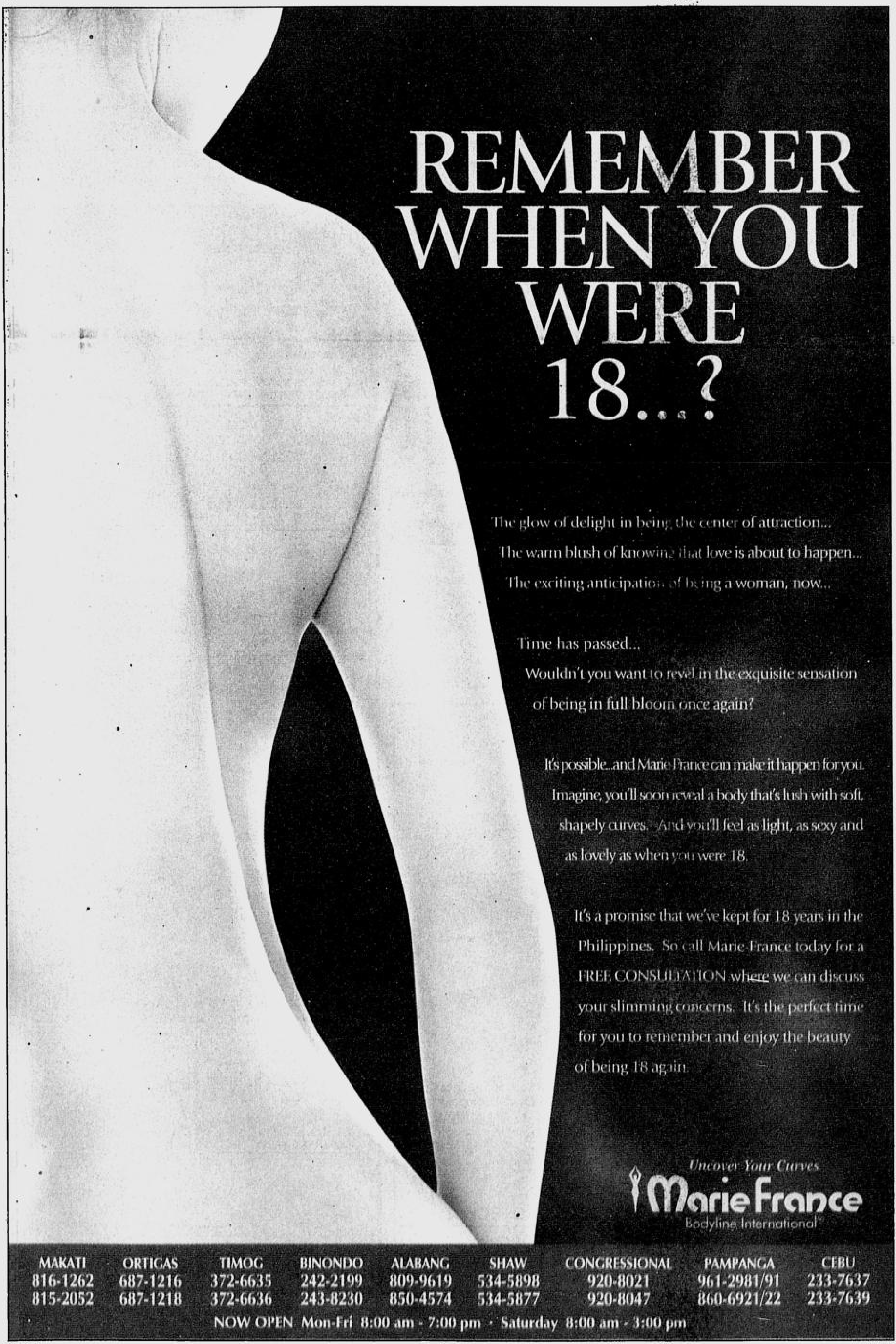

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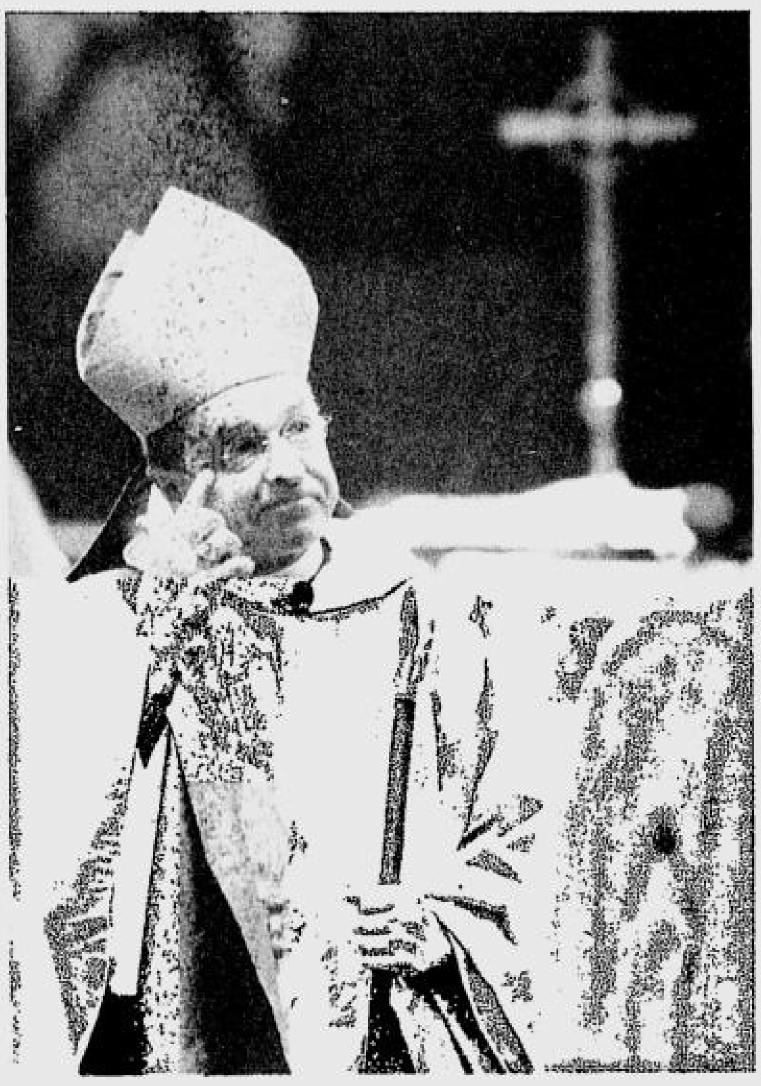

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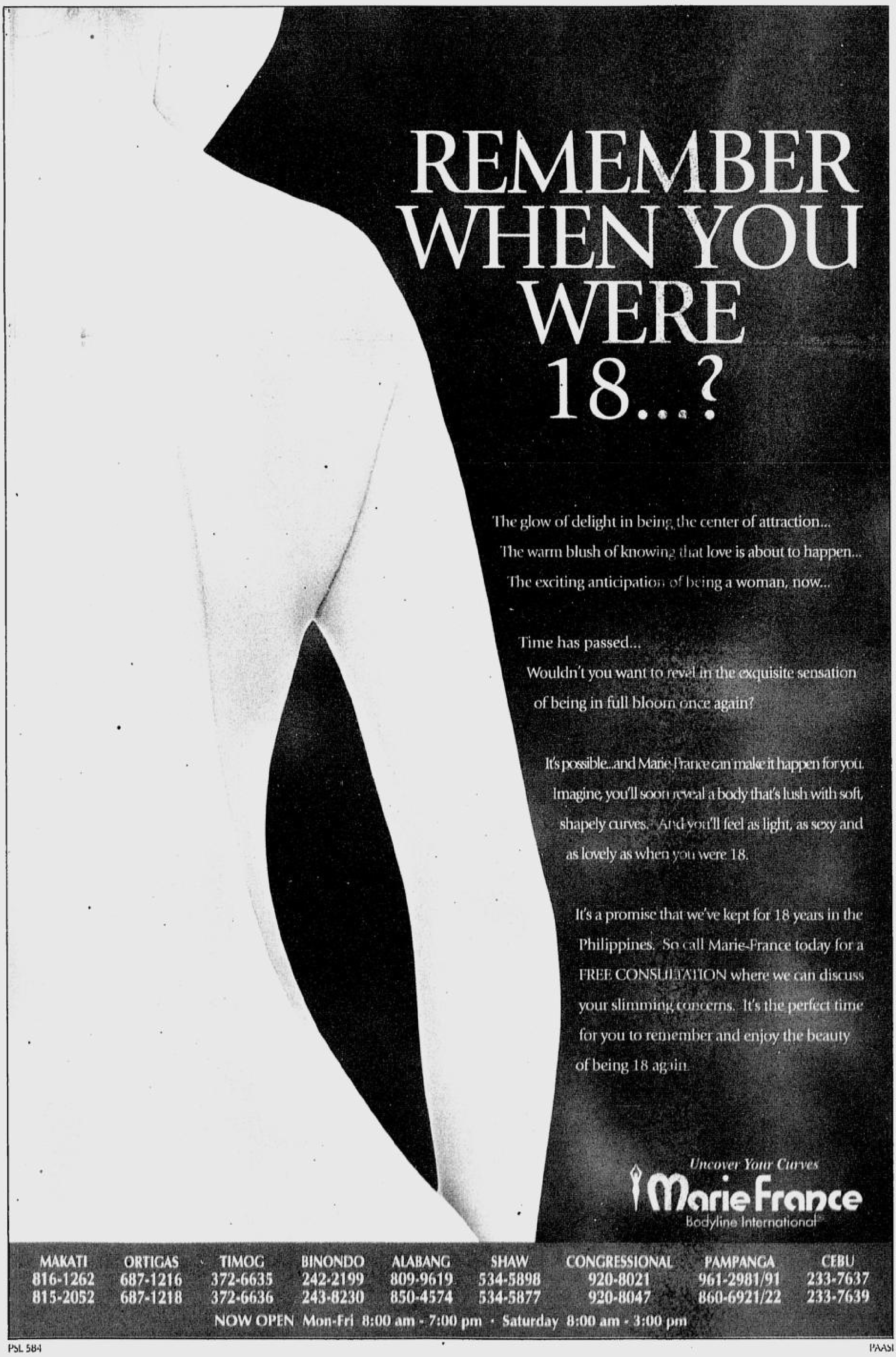

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Honest politicians

EDITORIALS

WHO is an "honest politician?" An honest politician, according to Simon Cameron, a politician who served as President Abraham Lincoln's secretary of war, is one who, when he is bought, will stay bought.

We hope that this description does not apply to any of the congressmen who signed the Articles of Impeachment against Chief Justice Hilario Davide. For all we know, some—or all of them—may have been impelled by the noblest of motives in moving to impeach the Chief Justice.

And yet the doubts are there. Why was the move attended by so much secrecy and so much haste? Why were the leaders able to gather 93 signatures in so short a time? Did the signatories even have the time to read and study the charges against the Chief Justice? Or did what one congressman once said happen in the House: You can pass a piece of toilet paper around and just on your say-so, you can get a sizable number of congressmen to affix their signatures to it.

Why the haste? Was this a life-and-death issue? Could it not have been attended with more deliberation, as befits so serious a matter as an impeachment, and one against the head of the Judicial Branch and the fifth highest-ranking official of the land? The House is supposed to be a deliberative body, but did its members deliberate before acting on the Articles of Impeachment? Or did they act with deliberate haste—for the most questionable of motives?

Impeachment is an extreme remedy, an action of last resort in serious cases involving high government officials. Is the resort to impeachment at this time, when there are other remedies and venues still open, justified?

Was there a prima facie case against the Chief Justice? The Commission on Audit gave him and the Supreme Court a clean bill of health. Did this not count in the consideration of the charges by the time-driven congressmen? Contrast this case with the impeachment cases against then Ombudsman Aniano Desierto and Election Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco, where the complainants presented tons of evidence. And yet the impeachment cases against them did not prosper.

Tell us, Honorable Congressmen, that you were impelled by the purest of motives in moving to impeach Chief Justice Davide. The public needs to be reassured. Honest.

Courageous auditors

WE commend the "Powerpuff Girls" of the Commission on Audit whose accounting skills and incorruptibility resulted recently in a string of victories of the public over electric companies that had been overcharging the public.

An eight-member, all-women team found that Meralco had wrongly included its income tax among the costs recoverable from consumers. Now Meralco, upon a final decision of the Supreme Court, has to refund a total of P28.15 billion to its consumers representing the overcharges since 1994.

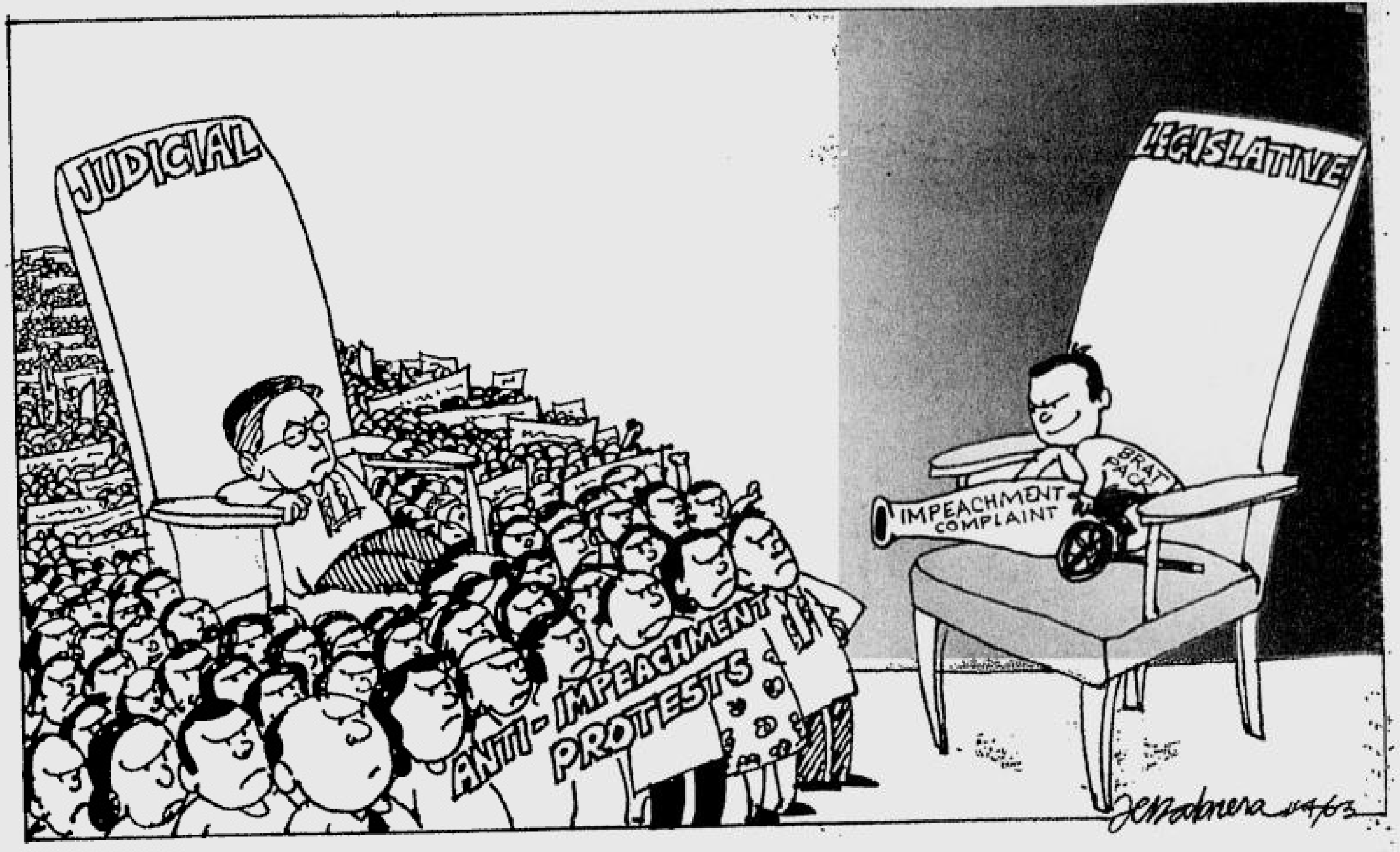
We applaud and commend the eight who were cited as the Civil Service Commission's recipients of the "Pag-asa ng Bayan" Award: state auditors Elena Agustin, Raquel Gorgonio, Edna Salaguban, Ludy de Leon, Magdalena Soriano, Lita Aquino, Lourdes Moran and Nelia Velleza. May their tribe increase!

A single auditor was all it took to expose the malpractice of four electric cooperatives in the provinces in computing the disputed purchased power adjustment. She is Cheryll Apalisoc who received the Presidential "Dangal ng Bayan" Award and some financial prizes for her accomplishment.

Apalisoc had the scare of her life when a city official in Mindanao asked her how much money it would take for her to gloss over a "miscomputation," all the while cleaning his gun in front of her. Despite the implied threat, she went ahead and reported the irregularity.

This is the type of state auditors who can be harnessed in the campaign against graft and corruption. For starters, we suggest that they be assigned to scrutinize the disposition of the pork barrel, euphemistically called Countrywide Development Fund, of the members of Congress.

But state auditors can't do the job of curbing graft and corruption all by themselves. They need the help of private citizens, civic groups, non-government organizations and other groups to ferret out irregularities. With a strong public opinion behind it, perhaps the campaign against graft and corruption will finally gain some headway.



Congress should pass a law to stop extravagance

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

LET'S look at the bright side: The brouhaha over the impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. should have achieved at least one good thing: the realization that so much money is wasted on extravagance at a time when the government and the people are desperately short of money. And since the House investigation of the Judiciary Development Fund is allegedly "in aid of legislation," the congressmen should be able to draft a bill that would prevent a repetition of the same.

Based on his explanation on "Debate," I believe the Chief Justice did not violate any law. I believe the billions in the JDF were properly divided, 80-20, between the court employees and the Supreme Court. The difference in opinion between the congressmen and Court officials is a matter of arithmetic. I believe that the Chief Justice followed the law and that everything he did was legal.

But being legal is not the same as being moral. Is it moral to be so extravagant just because the money is there and one is free to spend it, when millions of our countrymen are wallowing in abject poverty? Is it moral to pay P120,000 for each chair (if this is true) to rest the butts of the justices on when that amount could already have provided a home for a homeless family? Is it moral to spend P6 million for curtains when that amount can already house a whole colony of deserving squatters? Is it moral to provide each justice with three luxury vehicles (again, if this is true) when each of them probably already has two or more vehicles of his own? After all, he can ride in only one vehicle at a time. If others use the other vehicles, that is already against the law.

This is a common sin of other government agencies, especially government financial institutions, and Congress should pass a law to stop this abuse and waste of the people's money. Officials who already own several vehicles of their own, are provided, at the people's expense, with additional vehicles. And not just the ordinary ones but the expensive ones.

This may be understandable for officials who make frequent inspection trips to the provinces. But they include members of the board who make the trip from home to office for board meetings only once a month, because it is they who pass the resolutions authorizing the purchases. They even devise car plans that would allow them to own the vehicles after a few years practically for free. They also include the in-house auditors, otherwise the latter would not allow the vehicle purchases.

To the sin of abuse of privilege and waste is added the crime of bribery. Governors and mayors bribe their provincial board members and councilors with vehicles bought with their constituents' money. Thus, the luxury vehicles of government officials are paid for by taxpayers who have to fight their way to public transportation to get to work every day. Is this moral?

Not so long ago, the education secretary, of all people, and his undersecretaries were forced to resign because they bought themselves luxury vehicles. Farther back, the manager of the National Housing Authority, which is supposed to provide homes for the poor, also had to resign because he bought himself a luxury vehicle and a special chair—for less than P50,000—for his bad back. He made a bad thing worse by being quoted as saying, "We are a rich country masquerading as poor." These words of wisdom are now immortalized with other quotes from other government officials such as "Rich men's daughters don't steal," "What are we in power for?" and "What's wrong with providing for one's future?"

Still farther back, senators bought themselves vehicles at the people's expense. There was so much public indignation that then Senate President Jovito Salonga persuaded them to return the vehicles. If I'm not mistaken, to this day, senators and congressmen are not entitled to vehicles at public expense. If they're not entitled to these vehicles, why don't they pass a law to stop other officials from abusing this privilege?

Still farther back, President Elpidio Quirino lost his reelection bid because of the scandal when he bought himself a bedpan for P5,000, which was christened "the golden *orinola*." (It wasn't even gold plated.)

The moral is that in a very poor country like the Philippines, where millions of people live a hand-to-mouth existence scavenging in garbage dumps, millions more live in squatter colonies, and tens of thousands of children and old people survive by begging in the streets, you are courting disaster by engaging in conspicuous consumption. Imelda Marcos and her family and cronies were kicked out of Malacañang by angry Filipinos partly because of their conspicuous consumption.

But going back to the Supreme Court and its Baguio cottages, I know it is a decades-old tradition for the tribunal to hold sessions there in summer, but we are now in the age of air conditioning. And with the Court's session hall just renovated for tens of millions of pesos, complete with P6 million curtains and P120,000 chairs *(the Chief Justice said the chair cost P27,000 each—Ed.)* the justices would be just as comfortable here as in Baguio. No more need to make the difficult trek to the Pines City.

This is not saying that the Chief Justice should be blamed for that. Like I said, the summer session in Baguio is a tradition that has been with us for decades and it has become a habit. But it is a bad habit that should be corrected. In the first place, it smacks of colonialism. The American colonials couldn't stand the summer heat of the lowlands so they invented the summer session in the cool heights of Baguio. The justices are now all Filipinos. They're as acclimated to the summer heat as the rest of us.

Widening gyre

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

"TURNING and turning in the widening gyre/ The falcon cannot hear the falconer:/ Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;/ Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world./ The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere/ The ceremony of innocence is drowned;/ The best lack all conviction, while the worst/ Are full of passionate intensity."

Those are William Butler Yeats' lines from "The Second Coming." They're as graphic a description of the Apocalypse as you can get, and they've been used again and again to describe times of madness and mayhem, doom and despair. Those lines alighted in my mind last week and roosted there because of the situation we find ourselves in today. To call what we're facing a "constitutional crisis" is to call martial law a "crisis in governance." It's a euphemism of epic proportions. What we have is a world turning and turning in the widening gyre, things falling apart, anarchy let loose upon the world, the best do not have conviction, and the worst are full of passionate intensity. The center cannot hold.

But it's not as if everything just broke loose only in recent weeks. The war between Congress and the Judiciary is but the latest in a series of crises that have ravaged the nation over the last six years, and it won't be the last. The sensation of life being yanked off from its moorings and spun around by a whirling wind did not set in only last week, it did so with Erap being elected president and spread well after he went. Over the last six years, we've had many firsts, all of which constitute a claim not to fame but to notoriety.

During Erap's time, we had variously: Erap's attempt to bury Marcos in Libingan ng mga Bayani, as brazen an attempt to rewrite history as one could find; the transformation of Malacañang into a den of thieves—literally, all sorts of shady characters congregating there in the witching hours to hatch their plots with the aid of *pusoy* and Blue Label; the closing down of the Manila Times and the harassment of the INQUIRER, Erap ordering government and show biz to pull out ads from the latter; one scam after another coming to light involving various institutions from banks to the Department of Education; and the impeachment trial, the first to befall any Filipino president.

During GMA's time, we've had "Edsa III," a grotesque explosion of support for Erap but also in sublimated form a quite legitimate rebellion of the poor; the systematic subversion of democratic practice by the "war against terror"; the return of US military presence in the country; a military mutiny, the first in more than a decade, a byproduct of the militarization of society; a President vowing not to run again; a President running anyway, upping up the ante on politics as the turf of the unprincipled; a repeat of Chavit Singson's exposé against Erap in Panfilo Lacson's exposé against Mike Arroyo, complete with a parallel between Jose Velarde and Jose Pidal, but which had a different ending; the current impasse between Congress and the Judiciary.

There's been one other awesome development in GMA's time. That is that 19 percent of the population now wants to leave the country. The finding came out only early this year, but I caught a glimpse of it as far back as two years ago when I visited the US several months before 9/11. People I never expected to give up on the Philippines had given up on their country, and were living financially better but emotionally more miserably in the US. Many of them were gifted artists, writers and musicians.

Truly, the best have lost conviction while the worst—amply represented by Danding Cojuangco's and Jose de Venecia's boys in Congress—are full of passionate intensity.

It's easy to blame external factors for the widening gyre, not least of them the 1997 financial crisis that Fidel Ramos was lucky enough to encounter only during the end of his term. Before that, Ramos rode the crest of an Asian boom, many countries in the region turning into dragons, tigers and NICs. It's equally easy to blame a worldwide recession and the uncertainties brought on by war and terrorism. GMA in particular has been quick to cite both.

But all that is totally refuted by the example of Malaysia. As though to rub our noses in the dirt, at the time we were being rocked by the war Congress had brought to the Judiciary's doorstep, Malaysia was having the time of its life. Mahathir Mohamad was stepping down from office after leading his country to enviable progress in 22 years. Indeed, after ushering in a prosperity comparable to Singapore's—and far more impressively since Singapore is just a small city state—and turning himself into a powerful voice in world affairs by being a fierce critic of America's "war against terror."

We may not always envy Mahathir for his democratic failings—certainly we may not forget Anwar Ibrahim whom he threw in jail for being a thorn on his side—but we have got to admire him for what he has done for his country. Some 25 years ago, Malaysia, like Thailand, was one of those Southeast Asian countries sending students to UP and other Philippine schools to learn how to do things. It was a country we could still afford to try to land-grab Sabah from. Look where it is now—and look where we are now.

The last six years in particular have been spectacularly unkind to us. There are many reasons for why we have plunged steeply into this pit in that short period of time, things falling apart, anarchy being loosed, the center disintegrating in the spinning fire. But I'd put lack of leadership at the head, or center, of everything. That's what lies at the heart of it. Strange as it may sound, Erap and GMA are really not very different from each other.

They are very much the same.

(To be concluded)

In search of a dozen heroes

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

LAST Oct. 28, Rep. Leovigildo Banaag of Agusan del Norte wrote Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. an apology for signing the second impeachment complaint. He stressed he had no intention to debase the Chief Justice, or assault the independence of the judiciary or "spill the 'blood of war' in these times of uncertain peace" in our country. "With a contrite and repentant heart for my earlier uncircumspect and erroneous signing," Banaag withdrew his signature from the impeachment complaint, becoming the ninth representative to do so. (The others were Rozzano Biazon, Mauricio Domogan, Renato Magtubo, JV Bautista, Edgar Erice, Ernesto Nieva, Reylina Nicolas and Del de Guzman.) Reports indicate that others may follow suit soon, and we citizens should help convince them.

If the signatories could be brought down to less than 76, the complaint will go back to the justice committee where possible safeguards against abuse of the Judiciary Development Fund (JDF) could be more closely studied. It's now obvious that most of the congressmen did not get the accurate picture. Returning the complaint to committee is now also becoming popular as a way to avert the seemingly certain clash between the House of Representatives and the Supreme Court, which could plunge the country into a deep destabilizing crisis. To my mind, convincing the lawmakers to withdraw as a matter of the highest national interest is still the best option. The nation is in search of a dozen heroes.

* * *

The updated impeachment list as of yesterday includes the following names: Reps. Joseph Santiago, Darlene Custodio, Gregorio Ipong, Fausto Seachon, Claude Bautista, Zenaida Ducut, Angelo Montilla, Roseller Barinaga, Jenar Falcon, Cirilo Badelles, Isidoro Rodriguez Jr., Francis Escudero, Giorgidi Aggabao, Carlos Cojuangco, Elias Lopez, Jesli Lapus, Alfredo Maranon, Sherwin Gatchalian, Douglas Cagas, Generoso Tulagan, Juan Pablo Bondoc, Jurdin Romualdo, Elias Bulut Jr., Conrado Estrella III, Francis Nepomuceno, Arthur Pingoy Jr., Henry Lanot, Emilio Macias II, Gilbert Teodoro, Celia Layus, Felix Fuentebella, Marcelino Libanan, Ace Durano, Michael Duavit, Faustino Dy Jr., Manuel Ortega, Benasing Macarambon, Ulran Joaquin, Ronaldo Zamora, Mark Cojuangco, Julio Ledesma, Joseina Joson, Amado Espina, Abraham Mitra, Didagen Dilangalen, Aleta Suarez, Rodolfo Plaza, Gilbert Remulla, Rolex Suplico, Georgilu Hermida, Jose Carlos Lacson, Soraya Jaafar, Wilhelmino Alvarado, Augusto Baculio, Augusto Syjuco, Eric Singson, Miguel Zubiri, Celso Lobregat, Rene Velarde, Jacinto Paras, Jose Solis, Herminio Teves, Agapito Aquino, Cecilia Carreon, Samuel Dangwa, Ismael Mathay III, Nerissa Ruiz, Luis Bersamin, Emmylou Talino-Santos, Kim Bernardo Lokin, Perpetuo Ylagan, Joel Villanueva, Bellaflor Castillo, Edgar Espinosa, Joey Salceda, Constantino Jaraula, Genaro Alvarez, Tomas Dumpit, Eduardo Veloso, Carlos Padilla, Vincent Garcia, Aurelio Umali, Rodolfo Albano, Harry Angping, Aniceto Saludo and Joaquin Chipeco.

* * *

I asked Banaag, who rose from the ranks in his 23 years of government service which included stints as a councilor and vice mayor of Butuan City, what convinced him to retract. His reply: "I'm bowing to no one, only the Constitution." A San Beda College of Law Class '68 graduate whose mentors included former Justices Florenz Regalado and Jose Vitug, and former Senators Raul Roco and Rene Saguisag, he stressed that he signed on the mistaken notion that the new House rules on impeachment allowed the filing of the second complaint inasmuch as the first complaint was deemed "not initiated yet." But upon consulting the record of the Constitutional Commission on July 28, 1986, Banaag said, it became clear to him that in the thinking of the Constitution framers, filing is the same as "initiating." Thus, between the House rules and the Constitution, the latter should prevail, and the impeachment complaint is unconstitutional. Banaag is in favor of junking the complaint and constituting the House into a committee of the whole, in order to delve deeper into the JDF.

Another option the Agusan congressman is looking at is the practice in the United States, where an independent counsel recommended by the opposition studies all the issues in an impeachment, prior to the actual filing of the case. Recall that in the impeachment case against President Bill Clinton, independent counsel Kenneth Starr, who was recommended by the Republicans, did thorough spadework first. Banaag agrees that if Congress really wants that oversight function over the JDF, it should amend PD 1949 which not only created the JDF but also put its disbursements solely under the Chief Justice's prerogative.

* * *

An irate Sen. John Osmeña called up yesterday to protest my having written that he had coauthored with Sen. Francis Pangilinan Senate Bill No. 2675 which seeks to amend PD 1949, the Marcos decree that established the now controversial JDF. The Cebu senator, who's famous for not mincing words, stressed that he is the author of this bill, whereas Pangilinan, as chair of the Senate committee on justice, is the sponsor of the bill when it is reported out in the plenary. SB 2675 institutionalizes use of the JDF, alloting 80 percent for cost of living allowances of court members and personnel in proportion to their basic salaries, and not more than 20 percent for office equipment and facilities. It also seeks to put a stop to the popular but malevolent practice of justices, judges and court personnel receiving compensation and allowances from local government units, by expressly prohibiting it. I thoroughly support this prohibition.

Those brave women of COA

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I'M not so hot about their honorary "title," the "Powerpuff Girls," but the women auditors of the Commission on Audit deserve every bit of recognition that's come their way. Including—or especially, depending on your hierarchy of needs—a front-page photo and story in the INQUIRER.

Recognized by the Civil Service Commission with the "Pag-asa ng Bayan (Hope of the Nation)" Award, the women who bravely and doggedly uncovered the irregularities in Meralco's tax exemption claims have had to divide the P50,000 cash award among the eight of them. Before taxes, the reward comes to just over P6,000 for each of them, not much considering that the "best-dressed" participant in a show-biz awards night gets to take home at least P10,000!

But then, as the women told reporter Volt Contreras, it was never about the money. Considering that their report cost the utility giant P28.15 billion in refunds, it would certainly have been easy for Meralco, if it were so inclined, to dangle even "just" a billion before the auditors to help convince them to "go easy" on their findings.

The women aver, though, that nobody from Meralco had dared approach them with a bribe or a threat, though the company did try one last-ditch effort at getting them to go over "new" material for further perusal, which the women discovered were the same papers they had already pored over.

Still, the possibilities for graft and corruption in such a situation were just too rife to ignore. What was to stop even just one of the women auditors, for instance, from sending out feelers to Meralco that for a million or so reasons, she and some of her colleagues could be convinced to change their minds?

Maybe it's the awareness of how much moral stamina was required to resist the temptations of such a situation that convinced the CSC to honor the women of the COA.

* * *

ANOTHER auditor was similarly honored by the CSC: Cheryll Apalisoc who "singlehandedly" uncovered accounting malpractices by at least four electric cooperatives in the computation of the controversial purchased power adjustment (PPA).

Unlike the eight women who audited Meralco, Apalisoc had to face down bare-faced bribes and even more bare-faced threats and power brokering. One cooperative official even hinted that she could face sanctions from COA Chair Guillermo Carague, who, so the official claimed, was "close" to them.

To his credit, and I can believe the story, having known Gem Carague throughout his many years of government service, the COA chair rebuked the power brokers, urging them to "get rid of this rotten system of corruption."

Which brings us to this point: the courage of the lowly bureaucrat will be of no import if it is not matched and supported by the courage and integrity of the bureaucrat's superiors. If the COA higher-ups had so much as sent signals that they would willingly overlook compromises and mathematical sleight-of-hand, I'm sure the women auditors would have folded at the first manifestations of pressure or persuasion.

* * *

THAT the CSC awardees for exemplary public service were all women was no accident. For one, the odds favor women as outstanding government employees. The bureaucracy rank and file, but especially the mid-level professionals, are overwhelmingly women. It would be safe to say, indeed, that the government's day-to-day operations are in the hands of women, who toil quietly and in obscurity in the warrens of government offices, content to let their predominantly male bosses claim all the glory and the bigger paychecks.

One of the planks of Abanse! Pinay's legislative agenda, in fact, is equity in the appointment of women in the bureaucracy to positions of power and real decision-making. It seems unfair, doesn't it, that while well over 80 percent of all government employees are women, they make up less then 10 percent of those holding supervisory or higher positions.

Appointing more women to key posts in government also makes sense from governance point-of-view. Studies all over the world show that women, on average, exhibit a more stringent sense of moral scruples and are less willing to bend their principles to the exigencies of daily needs.

Maybe religiosity has something to do with it, especially for devout Filipinas. But I'm inclined to believe it has more to do with the fact that women take their roles as mothers seriously, and feel they must live out the values they seek to impart to their children.

* * *

WHICH is why I was so happy to see the women's picture on yesterday's INQUIRER front page, grabbing the above-the-fold place of honor for once from our national politicians who've done nothing but sicken our sensibilities.

Consider the contrast, for instance, between the photo of the humble women of the COA and the photos of House's "brat pack," young politicians already drunk with the power of their office.

Gazing at the picture, at the women in their nondescript government-issue uniforms, I felt proud to be counted among them—a Filipino woman—who "stoops to conquer," felling giant corporations and venal businesspeople by the simple power of hard work done well, done quietly, but done with a firm sense of commitment and personal honesty.

I don't think a grateful nation can ask for more from its citizens. And if it means being baptized a "Powerpuff Girl," I don't think the brave women auditors will mind the sacrifice too much.

Pho and old houses

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

WHETHER walking or riding around the city of Ho Chi Minh (I must admit "Saigon" has a more musical ring to it), it's hard to imagine that the country suffered 40 years of war and has only been open to the outside in the last decade. Impressive examples of 19th century French style architecture dominate government colonial buildings with their Victorian wedding-cake décor painted spanking clean. Colonial houses with tiled roofs have been converted into restaurants serving French or Vietnamese cuisine, and the towering trees around plazas made my companion remark that typhoons mustn't pass this way often.

The city has retained its old grid, with wide avenues that remind the visitor of Paris. Everywhere people are chattering, eating and riding the three million motorbikes on lanes reserved for them. There are seven million inhabitants in this once war-torn capital, all busy, it seems. The government may be communist but the people certainly have joined the market economy.

Temporary food stalls proliferate along many sidewalks and public spaces in the cities. Some stalls are open until early in the morning to cater to regular customers. Around noon, owners can be seen arranging tables and benches along the pavement to form makeshift shop floors. After two or three hours, when there are no more customers, they begin to remove all of their wooden furniture, so that the place resumes its former appearance. You can't help comparing it to the utter lack of discipline displayed by our own vendors, with the complicity of officials in return for a vote or a bribe. It's enough to make you wonder whether democracy works for us.

Across our hotel is a small plaza with a fountain flanking the opera house built in 1880, with high-domed ceilings and massive pillars. In the evening, an out-door café blooms and people take their drinks basking in the cool breeze. Carmina Burana, with a 200 strong chorale, was playing that evening combining both Vietnamese and German choirs.

Rice plays an essential role in the diet of this country of 80 million people as it does throughout Southeast Asia. Cuisine may differ between the north, south and central regions, but not the addiction to noodles that is eaten for breakfast, lunch and dinner in homes, restaurants and at roadside stands. Noodles are eaten wet and dry, in soup or beside soup, and are made in different shapes and thicknesses of wheat, rice and mung beans. (*Pho* is soup with noodles.) Secondly, no meal is complete without fresh vegetables and herbs. But their cuisine is a marvelous revelation.

I imagine Vietnamese cuisine was influenced by their French colonizers although I can't tell you how exactly. There are similarities to Chinese cooking, but instead of soy sauce, they use fish sauce (*patis* to you) almost exclusively. They also use a lot of basil, lemon grass, lime and something called kaffir lime. Many dishes are pure vegetarian.

The dish that most of us are familiar with and a pure delight is their *pho*. It is apparently also the most popular food among the Vietnamese. They eat it for breakfast, and many people have it for lunch or dinner. The grated rice noodle is made from a variety of fragrant rice called *gao te*. The broth of *pho bo* (*pho* with beef) is made by stewing the bones of cows and pigs in a large pot for a long time while the soup for *pho ga* (*pho* with chicken meat) is made by stewing chicken and pig bones together. The white chicken meat that is usually served with *pho ga* is boneless and cut into thin slices. With this you are given basil leaves, a slice of lime, chili sauce, plum sauce and bean sprouts to add to your soup if you wish.

Another favorite is their fresh spring rolls, wrapped in a very thin sheet of rice paper. It contains what we call glass noodles, lettuce and mint leaves and who knows what else. All I can tell you is that it's exquisitely light and delicious. It's so light you actually feel virtuous eating it. It is even tastier when dipped in a sweet, sour, and spicy sauce called *nuoc cham*.

Dining in converted colonial houses certainly heightens the experience of trying out new dishes, not least because of an Old World ambiance. If you do go to Ho Chi Minh City, make sure you try their grilled shrimp paste wrapped around a stick of sugar cane, their varied recipes for young pumpkin blossoms and their banana blossom salad served artistically on a banana frond.

Another memorable dish was beef simmered inside a section of bamboo, blue flames still flickering when brought to your table. But then the Vietnamese have retained their forests and have enough bamboo that they can afford to export to us. Reforestation is taken seriously.

The shopoholics can find all kinds of Vietnamese crafts: woodcarvings, stone carvings, lacquer ware (really, really gorgeous), paintings and ceramics. The porcelain goes back a long way. As a matter of fact, my introduction to Vietnamese pottery was in blue and white Annamese ware found in excavations. They're still producing them, so caveat emptor.

Equally exquisite are their embroideries. An hour or two at the old colonial Ben Thanh Market in the city center will more or less give you a pretty good idea of the range of products.

For Aamikhail

YOUNG BLOOD

Michelle Thea Plata

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

DEAR Khail,

Hello! How are you? Your two aunts told me they saw you with four friends. They're your new friends, I suppose. They said you looked different. Prettier, healthier and, of course, happier.

I wonder if I'll see you again—alone, or with your new friends. I'm not sure if I'm ready to see you. Maybe that's the reason I don't get to see you: I am not ready yet.

But how I miss you. I miss everything about you. I miss your black, shiny and smooth hair. How you hated to wear it down, even if I told you you looked like a model when you did. You always wanted it pulled up in a ponytail.

I miss your eyes. They were hidden behind your glasses during classes but they seemed to smile at all times. Yes, I really liked it when you smiled; your eyes seemed to smile with your lips. You smiled at the corniest joke, and I miss that, too. The way you laughed, even the way you cried. It broke my heart every time I saw you cry. I would have done anything to make sure you wouldn't cry. But I really liked it when I finally got to comfort you and wipe away your tears and hug you.

How I miss our hugs and kisses. The "I love you's" every morning and night. I miss those lunchtimes when I would call to ask how you were, if you had eaten your lunch and what you had been doing. I now wonder if it bothered you that I asked the same questions, or sent the same text messages every day. Nah, it's not like you to be bothered by things like those. You were always sweet to me—and to everybody.

Hey, I still keep your paintings, and of course, your letters. Those letters made me feel you thought about me that day. I sort of reread them these past few weeks, over and over again. Why I have memorized them! You wrote that you hope I'll always be happy for when I am happy, you are happy. And that you'll love me forever. So typical of you, putting me first before yourself. Ah, those letters never fail to make me cry.

Oh, I still cry every night. But I'm fine. Yes, I am sad these days, but it will pass. And like I have told many times, I will cry, naturally, when you leave, but you don't have to worry about me, about us, and that you should go whenever you feel it's time to leave.

I just hope your new friends will take good care of you. I'm sure they can take better care of you than I can. I'm quite confident about that. We have talked about that earlier. I was certain you would have good friends with you. Real angels, like you.

It makes me sad that you had to leave. But still I want to thank you for spending time with me. Those eight years were my happiest. I feel so blessed that you chose me. Thank you very much.

I think I feel better now. It's just that I wish to see you, too, in my dreams. You see, baby, mommy is not afraid of ghosts.

And one more thing, I will love you forever too, Khail!

Love,
Mommy

Michelle Thea Plata, 26, is the mother of Aamikhail, 8, who had Tetralogy of Fallot since birth. He died recently. She works at Fujitsu Ten Software Philippines Inc. as a software developer.

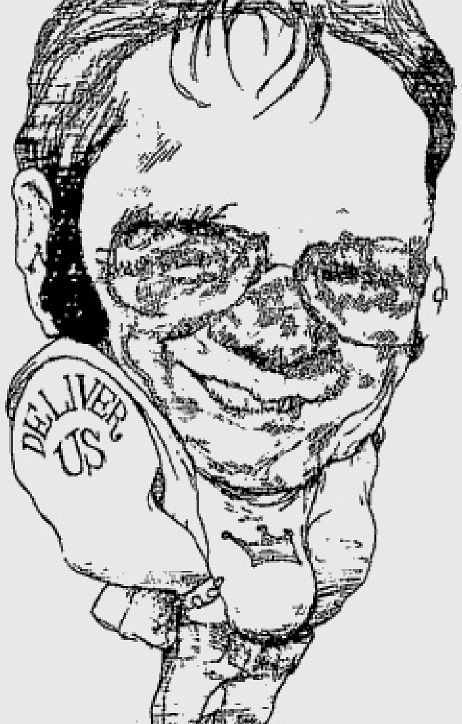
Dear Grandmother

Gabriel Atienza Coronel

WE miss you dear grandmother,
But we know you're here forever.
Here you were kind and nice,
Now you are in paradise.
We're sorry for the bad things we did to you.
We will keep our hearts clean and true.
Our hearts we lift to God and you,
Because we know you love us too.
Here on earth we weep and mourn,
Now our hearts are wounded and torn.
Our love for you will never end,
And our chain of love will never bend.
Here we look up and stand,
To you and God's angel band.
Our eyes have tears that cry for you,
Now praying and crying are all we do.
But still I know you're here with me,
Thanks for loving our family.
I love you dear grandmother,
Your memories I will cherish forever.

Gabriel Atienza Coronel, 10, is in Grade V at De La Salle Zobel School. He wrote this poem as a gift for her grandmother, Iluminada V. Atienza, on what would have been her 74th birthday and 50th wedding anniversary this Nov. 8.

IN THE NEWS



Fernando Poe Jr.

Sacrifices that build up our lives

OUR lives stand on the sacrifice of so many—our parents, our teachers, our martyrs, heroes and saints.

Sacrifice is an important word. It comes from Latin words, *"sacro"* and *"facere."* To sacrifice then means to make sacred. Our lives become sacred because of sacrifice. Our lives become meaningful because of sacrifice. Sacrifice transforms. It transforms individuals, communities, entire societies and even the world. The great men and women of the world by their sacrifice have transformed the world. Recently, Mother Teresa of Calcutta was beatified by Pope John Paul II. These two individuals in their unique and special ways, have transformed the world.

When we sacrifice, we forget ourselves and offer up something for the good of others. Sacrifice, whether big or small, is always an act of selflessness, always an act of love.

Edsa was an event which involved personalities and groups. However, after three Edsas we wonder why real change never took place. From Cory Aquino to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, four presidents after the Marcos dictatorship, so little has changed in our lives. We looked at the Edsas and the personalities involved in those events and asked what was wrong, what was lacking?

My own personal recollections of the Edsas revolve around my experience of sacrifice, that of mine and the many others who for a few days forgot themselves and offered something for the good of others. Three important elements make up Edsa: prayer, solidarity and, most importantly, sacrifice.

Edsa I took place after the long and painful years of sacrifice under and against the cruel, inhuman and unjust Marcos dictatorship. Many lost property, business and even lives. One case involved the Lopezes. They lost Meralco. Marcos ordered Meralco sequestered and placed under government control. This was painful for the Lopezes. After Edsa I, President Aquino restored Meralco to the Lopezes.

Today, 17 years after the Lopezes regained Meralco, both the Lopezes and many of us have forgotten our sacrifices during the Marcos years.

Today, thousands of us march to Meralco to remind the Lopezes of their sacrifices of the Marcos years. We do more and ask them to stop sacrificing us on the altar of profit and greed. This is only the beginning. Edsa can still succeed with prayer, solidarity and sacrifice.

—FR. ROBERT REYES, Gomburza

Lapid should reconsider son's candidacy

WITHOUT saying it, Gov. Manuel Lapid has implied that his son, Mark, is indispensable to the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats to warrant his selection as governor-candidate of Pampanga. This is what one could deduce from the news item "Son's candidacy keeps Lapid edgy." (PDI, 10/12/03) What made the popular governor think so, is puzzling many independent political watchers in the province.

Many believe the governor should not be deluded into thinking that his son's stay in the Sangguniang Panlalawigan due to his being chair of the SK Provincial Federation and, lately, chair of the ABC Provincial Federation, has earned him that esteemed status in his party. He should think it over and use whatever wisdom he has gained from serving as a three-term governor before even entertaining this idea.

First, these positions were offered on a silver platter to Mark, because he is the "First Son" of the province. It is the practice not only in Pampanga that sons and daughters are usually accorded a chance to vie for these positions for no other reason than that their fathers or mothers wield political power in their locality. An expectation of future political favors rather than proven capabilities is the basis for the selection to run for public office.

Second, many Kapampangans are unaware of Mark's work output in provincial ordinances and resolutions espoused or successfully passed into law during his incumbency as provincial board member.

Third, monarchial rule in Pampanga ceased when Spain declared it as the first province in Luzon in 1571. We have elections, not successions, to determine who should govern the province. It would be more "statesmanly" if more seasoned and equipped Kapampangans are given the break to steer the province to greater heights of progress and development.

Governor Lapid is doing more harm and lessening his son's chances in the coming elections and endangering his own political career as well. Instead of using his influence to secure his party's endorsement for his son's candidacy, he should let him fight his own fight and show his true mettle and earn the right to run for governor of Pampanga. Many voters would find it hard to vote for a man hiding behind his father's popularity and accomplishments but also for allowing him to do actual battle in a contest as important as that over the governorship of Pampanga.

—RAUL G. SARMIENTO,
Potrero, Bacolor, Pampanga

Translate uproar to votes in 2004

MR. Conrad de Quiros' column on Oct. 27 in the PDI had hit several nails right on their heads. I'm sure his expressions of utter disgust over the shameful shenanigans of our political leaders find resonance in many of our countrymen including myself.

What was shocking to me was the time when the Marcoses and their lackeys, crooks and cronies were allowed back into the country. I became even more revolted when they began to spread their sinister tentacles and then started calling the shots once again.

They now have gown even bolder and bolder as to brazenly impeach the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Standing on very dubious grounds for impeachment, they seem determined to sacrifice the whole country in order to achieve their own selfish evil ends.

I hope and pray that the present snowballing uproar among the people, stirred up by this perfidious gang of mental pygmies, will translate into their total repudiation at the 2004 polls.

—C. M. PAULIN, MD,
1000 W. Main St.
Freehold, NJ 07728, USA

MACAPAGAL ARROYO

Dividends for GMA in 2004

IN THE FACE of grave national uncertainty and mounting poverty plaguing the Philippines, the announcement of President Macapagal-Arroyo that she will run for the presidency in 2004 is a welcome development. This courageous move will put an end to the political disarray of 2002-2003 that forced various leaders of the country to put their time, talent, effort and financial resources toward endless bickering rather than in socially beneficial undertakings. Her announcement has placed the Philippine political landscape in clearer perspective, which can be summed up in a question of options as follows: "Do we want good governance and economic recovery which is certain under President Macapagal or are we willing to gamble with greater uncertainty under a new leadership?" The answer should be obvious. We cannot afford to experiment in this critical period.

A mandate coming from the 2004 elections will give the Philippines a remarkably better President Macapagal that has never been seen before. She has learned the hard way from the mistakes of the past, such as in the appointment of one or two misfits to sensitive posts and mass indifference to grandstanding and self-serving maneuvers of prominent political personalities. This time, we shall see a President Macapagal who will be armed with a longer list of better-qualified appointees for sensitive posts. This time, we shall see a President Macapagal who will rally us to unity and cooperative endeavors, not for unity's sake, but toward the achievement of strategic objectives such as the flourishing of higher value-added enterprises in various sectors that will make available more and better-paying jobs that will lift the majority of Filipinos out of poverty.

President Macapagal's experience with the bureaucracy, coupled with her good grounding in economics, will pay dividends starting 2004. Lest we forget, it was severe corruption and bad infrastructure that made the Philippines lose investors to its Asian neighbors. As President Macapagal continues to pursue the measures she has started in order to have an efficient and morally superior bureaucracy, we shall see good governance. Corruption in the public service will be reduced to a minimum.

Then shall we witness the advent of better delivery of social services and improvement in the quality of Philippine infrastructure that, to this day, remain to be but an elusive dream. All these are bound to spawn the much-awaited recovery and sustain the positive GNP growth, benign inflationary environment, and stability in the peso's foreign exchange rate that has characterized President Macapagal's management of the Philippine economy.

—VILLAMOR VITAL,
D.A. Market Securities Inc., c/o
nestorsaguila@yahoo.com

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Southeast Asia's strongmen (1)

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE FOUNDING members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations were Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, Brunei and Thailand. These countries were described as being part of the "Free World," choosing to be pro-Western and capitalist. "Pro-Western" has been equated with "democratic," but the reality is that the Southeast Asian countries were in fact ruled, at one time or another, by strongmen. I will explain, shortly, why I've collapsed the two words into one.

Brunei is a bit out of the Asean mold, with a sultanate that has never had pretensions about democratic rule. The other countries all claim to be electoral multi-party democracies but each has had its share of dictators and authoritarian leaders, complete with predictable elections where the ruling party would garner all the votes.

Thailand had several despotic generals but none stayed in power beyond 10 years. I will write more about the more durable of these strongmen, the last of whom was Mahathir Mohamad, who retired last Saturday after 22 years as prime minister of Malaysia. That's a long time, but really about the average for the region's authoritarian leaders.

The shortest authoritarian experiment was that of our own Ferdinand Marcos, who was president for 21 years, from 1965 to 1986. Sukarno, Indonesia's founder, was Indonesia's head of state from the declaration of independence in 1945 to 1968, or 23 years. The last two years of Sukarno's presidency were really more symbolic, the power having passed on to Suharto, who had been appointed "temporary" president in 1966. That temporary presidency stretched on till 1998, for a total of 32 years.

Suharto was in power only slightly longer than Lee Kuan Yew, who was Singapore's prime minister from 1959 (he was only 35 years old then) till 1990, for a total of 31 years. Lee Kuan Yew continues to sit in Singapore's cabinet as senior minister and to speak out on many national issues. Mahathir will, no doubt, take on a similar role in Malaysian politics.

These strongmen's terms spanned an entire generation, yet many Asians, including Filipinos, will argue that you need these strongmen in power for that long a period to be able to bring about changes. Strongman politics has in fact been the norm in the region for the longest time, a characteristic of tribal and feudal societies. Even before Western colonizers came into the region, we already had datus, sultans and kings, ruling with absolute power and often using the full coercive force of warriors and soldiers.

In the post-colonial context, some of these strongmen had to rule over large countries, often artificially stitched together by the Western colonizing powers. If you think the Philippines is geographically and ethnically fragmented, you should look at Indonesia, the world's fourth largest country in terms of population, with some 300 ethnic groups spread out over 12,000 islands. Malaysia and Singapore had much smaller populations but faced additional problems of multi-racial tensions. Singapore, with a predominantly ethnic Chinese population, was in fact the product of secession from Malaysia.

Lee, Sukarno, Suharto, Mahathir and Marcos all criticized "Western" democracy as being inappropriate for Asians. Each proposed his own alternative to Western systems, but all were authoritarian. Sukarno had his "guided democracy," Suharto had his "New Order" and Marcos had his "revolution from the center," claiming to offer a middle way between "rightists" (the traditional oligarchy) and the "leftists" (the communists).

All these leaders convinced citizens to accept dictatorial rule by arguing that modernization and development were not possible without sacrificing civil liberties. National security was invoked, usually by pointing to the threat of communist insurgencies, to impose draconian laws, ranging from media censorship to internal security laws that allowed arrests and prolonged detention without formal charges.

Singapore went even further, launching experiments in social engineering, passing laws, rules and regulations that regulated every facet of its citizens' lives. There were all kinds of do and don't laws—banning chewing gum, for example (now rescinded, I hear), as well as requiring the flushing of toilets. This Big Brother state legacy remains, with the government still playing an important role in everyday life, all the way up to launching campaigns urging Singaporeans to smile more.

Southeast Asians joke about Singapore as antiseptic and dour. My favorite joke is the one about Singapore's dogs running across the border into Malaysia just to be able to bark. But many also ask why other countries couldn't have imitated Lee Kuan Yew to develop. In the Philippines, a variation on this wistful thinking is that Marcos could have been as successful as Lee Kuan Yew in nation-building if it had not been for his greedy wife.

Such speculation only underscores the need to look more closely into the different experiences we've had with authoritarianism in the region and figure out just how much strongman rule actually contributed to development. That's what I'll tackle on Thursday.

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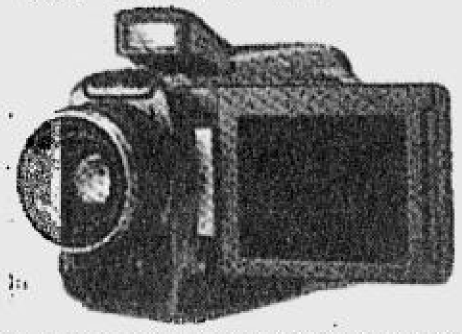

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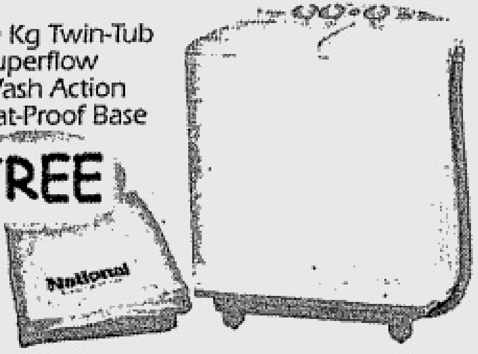

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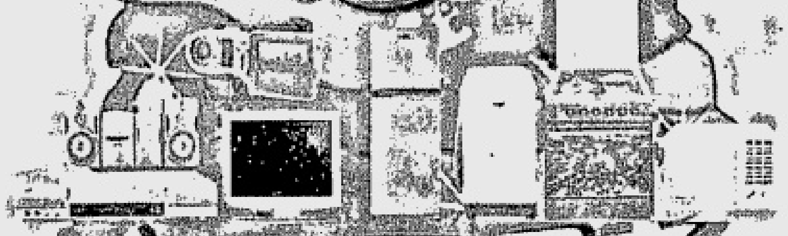

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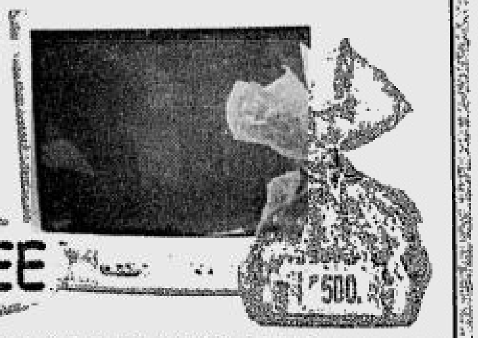

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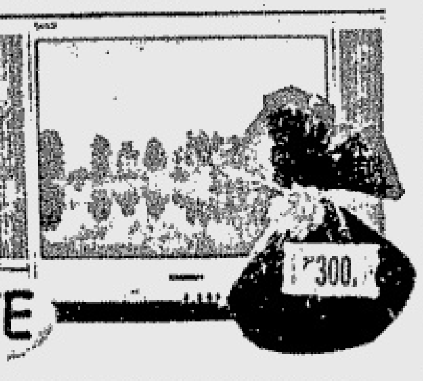

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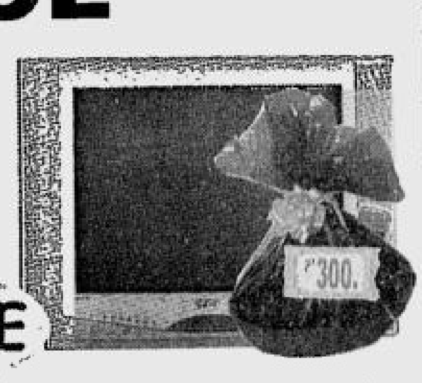

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NBI exec shoots it out with robber

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—A suspected highway robber was wounded after engaging a National Bureau of Investigation official in a shootout on Friday in Banaue, Ifugao, about 90 km from here.

Donald Alangwawe, who the NBI tagged as a suspect for a series of highway robbery incidents in Ifugao and Mt. Province, is now facing charges of direct assault, frustrated homicide and illegal gun possession, following a shootout with lawyer Jose Limmayog, NBI Cagayan Valley director.

NBI agent Gerald Butale said the shootout ensued after Limmayog, who was on his way to Bontoc, Mt. Province, alighted from his van and confronted Alangwawe, whom he recognized as a robbery suspect, along a road in Barangay Sumigar in Banaue.

Based on the complaint he filed with the NBI office here on Monday, Limmayog said he had to immediately seek cover after Alangwawe started shooting him using a .45 cal. revolver.

Limmayog said he returned fire after sensing that the suspect had ran out of bullets. He hit Alangwawe in the thigh and abdomen.

Doctors at the Medical Mission Group Hospital in Solano town, where the suspect was taken, said Alangwawe could not be interviewed.

Also wounded in the shootout was Nebres Rivero, driver of a bus that carried Korean tourists. Rivero was hit by a stray bullet.

Butale said Alangwawe is a member of a robbery gang that had been preying on motorists and tourists along the Ifugao-Mt. Province road. *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Another Army exec punished in Gen. Santos

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—An Army officer has been placed on floating status for allegedly beating a tricycle driver here last September.

Col. Edgardo Gurrea, head of the Joint Task Force Gensan (JTFG) and deputy commander of the Army's 601st Infantry Brigade, told reporters that Lt. Danilo Fuentes would be restricted to the barracks for a year as part of the disciplinary action against him.

Gurrea said Fuentes would also lose his chance to be promoted during the period he is in the "freezer."

Despite the decision of the victim not to push through with the criminal complaint, the military leadership here slapped Fuentes with an administrative sanction.

On Sept. 20, Fuentes boarded a tricycle and asked the driver to bring him to the JTFG headquarter in Barangay Bula. But the driver, a certain Jun Lopango, a non-resident here, asked the military officer to guide him as he was not familiar with the area.

Verbal tussle ensued between the two and when the tricycle finally reached the task force's headquarter, Fuentes punched the driver before leaving.

The driver asked the help of journalists in elevating the complaint to higher military officials here. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

BACOLOD, CEBU

Court employees go on mass leave

COURT operations in Negros Occidental, Negros Oriental and Iloilo were paralyzed after the employees went on mass leave to demand higher wages.

Dressed in red T-shirts, about 900 court employees in Bacolod City and Negros Oriental converged at the Bacolod Hall of Justice and held a street march.

After the march, they all went home, leaving the courts empty.

Some of the judges remained in the courtrooms, like Bacolod Regional Trial Court Judge Roberto Chiongson. "We are here in case there are urgent matters that need to be acted on," he said.

But RTC Judge Ray Allan Drilon said that even if the judges were present in court, the operations were paralyzed because there were no court employees.

Rene Tolentino, president of the Coalition of Trial Court Employees of Negros Occidental, said the week-long mass leave might last longer if their demands are not met.

"Our protest action is being staged because of our congressional exclusion from salary increases granted under the Judiciary Compensation Act," he said.

"We are demanding wage increases in the light of the recent hike in allowances of judges and justices equivalent to 100 percent of their basic salaries to be given over a period of four years," he added.

In Negros Oriental, more than 500 court employees joined in the mass leave.

Victoriano Ragay Jr., president of the Philippine Association of Court Employees (PACE)-Negros Oriental, said court employees should also be given a salary increase proportional to the increase received by judges and justices.

"Like them (judges and justices), we have our families to feed also," he said.

He stressed that their mass action had nothing to do with the moves to impeach Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. over the alleged misuse of the Judicial Development Fund (JDF).

Except for the arraignment of detained suspects, hearings were also suspended at the Chief Justice Ramon Avanceña Hall of Justice in Iloilo City after about 300 court employees joined the mass leave.

The employees wearing red armbands and ribbons assembled at the lobby of the Hall of Justice at 7:45 a.m. and did not report for work. Their protest action will last until Wednesday.

Cesar Regalado, Court Legal Researchers Association of the Philippines (Clerap)-Iloilo vice president, said their protest action was neither in defense of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. or in support of the impeachment complaint filed against him.

"We don't want politicians to ride on the issues we are raising," Regalado said.

In Cebu City, the Clerk of Court of the Municipal Trial Court in Cities expressed surprise why some court employees questioned how the Supreme Court used the JDF when their cost of living allowances (Cola) increased during the term of Davide.

Teresita Remotigue said it was possible that these employees did not compute their salaries and allowances very well.

Remotigue said her monthly salary including her allowances could reach up to more than P30,000. She, however, admitted that the clerks of court were considered as next to the judges in terms of salaries and allowances.

But Remotigue said a utility worker is receiving at least P5,500 in basic salary but received at least P3,750 in Cola every month, higher than her Cola, which is between P2,500 and P2,750.

Remotigue said the Cola from the JDF differs every month because this is dependent on the collection of the filing fees. *Carla P. Gomez, Nestor P. Burgos Jr., Romy G. Amarado and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

WE PROTEST
CONGRESSIONAL EXCLU
ROM THE ALLOWANCE INC

THE PROTESTING employees at the Bacolod Hall of Justice paralyzed court operations during their mass leave yesterday. CARLA P. GOMEZ

HOSPITALITY
US soldiers watch an ethnic Muslim dance in the remote village of Talungkasay in Zamboanga City during a recent medical mission in the village which was held under heavy security. REUTERS

₱83M razed in Albay fire

TABACO CITY—A four-hour fire of still undetermined origin burned the Antonio A. Berces Memorial Supermarket at the heart of this city on All Saints Day.

The fire, the third to hit the public market in 15 years, started at around 3 a.m. and damaged some P83 million worth of goods and other pieces of property.

Fire trucks from neighboring towns rushed to the fire scene but were not enough to control the damages.

Fire Senior Insp. Renato Obsun, city fire marshal, said firefighters immediately climbed up the burning three-story market building where they rescued more than a dozen people who were trapped at the second and third floors.

No casualty was reported but all the 400 stalls, except for the ground floor, have been charred, Mayor Alex Burce said.

In Cebu City, 31 houses were gutted in the fire that broke out at about 4:20 a.m., on Saturday in an urban poor area in Barangay Mabolo, said SFO1 Felix Romero, Cebu City Fire Department investigator.

No one was hurt in the fire that destroyed about P500,000 worth of property, he said.

Initial investigation showed that the fire was triggered by faulty electrical wiring at the house of Bernardo Cornejos. It spread to other houses and was put under control in 35 minutes. *Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

NPA denies links to explosives experts from JI

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The New People's Army (NPA) has denied an allegation of an Army spokesperson here that two explosives experts with links to the terror group Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) are training communist rebels on Panay Island.

In an e-mailed statement, the Coronacion Chiva "Waling-Waling" Command, the regional NPA command, called the allegation of Maj. Oscar Lasangue a "big and ridiculous lie."

"There are no terrorists in the NPA's ranks who bomb innocent civilians or sow fear among the people," said Julian Paisano, the spokesperson of the NPA command.

Paisano, apparently a *nom de guerre*, said the NPA does not need to be trained on the manufacture and use of command-detonated explosives because they have long been using "this legitimate weapon" in attacks against the Armed Forces of the Philippines and "other enemies of the people."

Lasangue, spokesperson of the Army's Task Force Panay (TFP), earlier said two JI suspects arrived in April from Mindanao via Negros Island. The two were training NPA rebels in Northern Panay, he added.

The TFP is in charge of counter-insurgency operations on Panay Island.

He alleged the two suspected JI members were fetched by a certain "Teray," allegedly the wife of a member of the executive committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines on Panay Island.

The two suspects whom he identified only as "Abdul" and "Osman" were able to enter Panay Island when they eluded government troops who tried to intercept them in a place where they were expected to dock, according to Lasangue.

But Paisano said the "terrorists are within the AFP," citing the allegations of leaders of the Oakwood mutiny who accused former Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and former intelligence chief Victor Corpuz as being behind the bombings in Davao City.

The rebel spokesperson said the allegations are part of the "vain efforts" to link the NPA with terrorist groups because of the continuous defeats of the AFP in the battlefield and after failing to isolate the NPA from the people.

He said it is aimed at stopping the "extensive and worsening demoralization and factional fighting among the enlisted personnel and CAFGU because of the corruption and terrorism of top officers of the AFP."

Bus falls off bridge in Cagayan; 2 killed

ILAGAN, Isabela—Two persons were killed while 34 others were hurt on Sunday morning when a bus bound for Abulug, Cagayan, fell off a bridge in Gattaran town, police said.

Senior Supt. Rodrigo de Gracia, Cagayan police director, identified the fatalities as Rovelyn Balao, 18, and Jose Rogelio, 41, both of Abulug.

De Gracia said 34 passengers of the Florida Bus were taken to Cagayan Valley Medical Center in Tuguegarao City.

The bus driver, Randy Marquez, surrendered to the police.

De Gracia said the bus was cruising along the national highway at about 4 a.m. Sunday but Marquez miscalculated a curve leading to the Carmona Bridge in Gattaran.

Reports said Marquez lost control of the bus due to the slippery road brought about by rains accompanying tropical storm "Viring". *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Ecija women light candles for return of missing husbands

CABANATUAN CITY—Two women in Nueva Ecija lighted candles during the feast of the dead last week, hoping that this would guide their husbands' way home.

The two men, Honorio Ayroso and Juan Orcino Jr., have been missing since Feb. 9, 2002, when five armed men abducted them in San Jose City.

"We are hoping that they are still alive and someday they will come home to us," said their wives Dee Batnag-Ayroso and Cristina Orcino.

Batnag-Ayroso, in a statement, said she still believes that the two men were abducted by policemen or Army soldiers. She said there was no other group that could have perpetrated the crime as "they have the best capability and the means to carry out the operation and the motive to abduct the two."

Honorio Ayroso is a former activist-leader and belongs to the party-list group Bayan Muna, while Juan Orcino Jr. is a local coordinator of Bayan.

"There could be no other motive to abduct the two because they wanted to eliminate them as they were perceived to be enemies of the state," Batnag-Ayroso said.

She said the military had abducted and interrogated her husband and Orcino in 1989 and 1990.

She said her husband, along with nine other activists, were abducted by members of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) while Orcino was taken by members of the intelligence unit of the regional constabulary command sometime in 1990.

Although the two were charged with illegal possession of firearms, they were subsequently freed by the court.

Last year, Batnag-Ayroso said, the Commission on Human Rights in Central Luzon started to investigate the disappearance of Ayroso and Orcino. But she said the investigation stopped for unknown reasons.

"We are still holding on to a flicker of hope that they are still alive as there is still no proof yet about their death," Batnag-Ayroso said.

She said, "We will not stop looking for them and finding out the truth to attain justice and bring the perpetrators of the crime for prosecution." *Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

DE ORO CONTROVERSY

Lawyer files suit in ₱1-per-lot deal

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—A lawyer sued at least 12 officials here over a report by the Commission on Audit that indicated the city's purchase of a 68-hectare land for resettlement of poor urban dwellers was clouded by irregularity.

Ed Tamondong, former general counsel of the Senate blue ribbon committee, filed 18 counts of violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act against Mayor Vicente Emano, Vice Mayor John Elizaga, nine city councilors and Zenaida Lago, city treasurer for the land deal and several other alleged irregularities.

The COA audit, which covered several transactions entered into by the city government from January 2000 to June 30, 2001, found the purchase of the land disadvantageous.

The land, which the city bought for more than P1 million, was sold to beneficiaries for only P1 per lot under the city government's "Piso-piso Program."

Tamondong said the land deal was apparently used to bolster Emano's chances of reelection because it "transpired before the May 2001 elections."

"The deal was inimical to the city government because it stood to lose millions of pesos in taxpayers' money used for the purchase of the land after it was sold at a token fee of P1 per home lot," Tamondong said in a statement e-mailed to the INQUIRER.

The lawyer said aside from the land deal, Emano and the officials also committed other irregularities including awarding a P23-million contract to GC Diversified International Inc. for engineering designs that the city engineering office was capable of doing.

Tamondong asked the Sandiganbayan "for the immediate preventive suspension" of Emano, Elizaga, the nine councilors and Lago "to prevent them from tampering and manipulating the records pertaining to the questioned transactions."

Emano shrugged off the allegations.

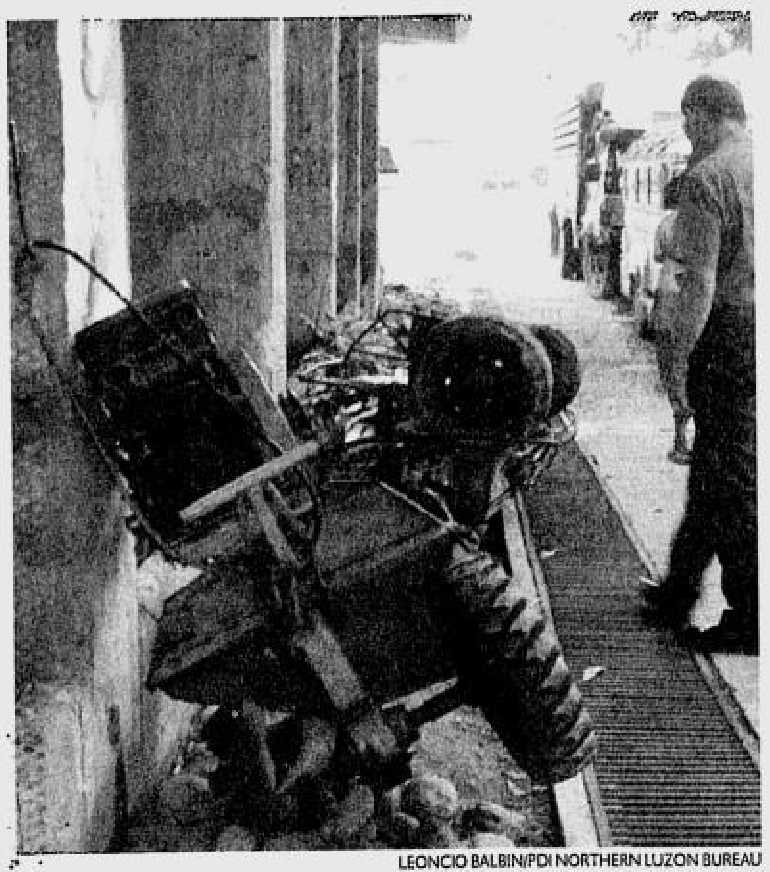
In an interview with Bombo Radyo here on Monday, Emano said he could smell politics behind the filing of the charges.

"Tamondong used to work in Senator (Aquilino) Pimentel's office and this is nothing new. By all means, I am ready to face these charges because there was nothing wrong in the project. Is it wrong that I am giving out lots to the urban poor to give them shelter? Jail us if they want, the truth will be with us," he said.

Councilors Michelle Tagarda and Mary Anne Enteria, two of the accused officials, also defended the land purchase saying there was nothing wrong with it.

"Just in case we would be proven wrong then we would be ready to face the consequences, however, let it be known that our conscience is clean," Enteria told the INQUIRER.

Like Emano, they branded the charges as recycled efforts. *Grace C. Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



LEONCIO BALBIN/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

TRAGIC LESSON
Remnants of a farm tractor lie by the roadside in Nueva Vizcaya after it was hit by a cargo truck, smashing it into pieces and killing six persons who were riding in the tractor which has became a mode of transportation in the province.

ROUNDUP

Drug man nabbed

SAN FERNANDO CITY—A leader of an illegal drug syndicate operating in Ilocos and three of his men were arrested by the police in a buy-bust operation in Barangay San Vicente here Monday. Chief Supt. Claudio Cabreros, Ilocos police director, identified the suspects as Roberto Fernandez, 37, said to be the leader of the Alviento Group and the region's seventh most wanted illegal drug suspect; Betty Campos Fernandez, 41; Mohalidin Minor Manibpel; and Recto Huerto, 50. Confiscated from them were four sachets containing 60 grams of shabu worth P120,000, a .22 cal. pistol and a Toyota Corolla taxi which, the police said, was being used for their illegal drug operations.

Peter La. Julian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

3 men drown

CABANATUAN CITY—Three men drowned while crossing the Pampanga River in Barangay Sapang here on Sunday. Members of a search and recovery team have yet to recover the body of Melvin Santos, 21, on Wednesday morning. The bodies of the two other victims, Jerwin Manubay and Rommel Padolino, were earlier recovered. Police said the victims and six other men came from a basketball game in another village and decided to swim across the river to reach their village located at the other bank of the Pampanga River. Their six companions successfully crossed the river but the strong current swept the victims.

Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk

2 rebels surrender

SOGOD, Southern Leyte—Two New People's Army leaders in Leyte who admitted participation in the ambush-slaying of four Scout Rangers in Mahaplag, Leyte in September 2001 surrendered last week to the 43rd Infantry Battalion here. Lt. George Rabusa, 43rd IB commander, said ex-rebels Louie Anas Tejano, 31, of Hinunangan, Southern Leyte, and Felix Abadines, 45, of Mahaplag, Leyte, also gave up their M-16 rifles. They received P18,000 each for the surrendered firearms in line with the government's "Balik Baril" program. The two said they surrendered because they could no longer endure the hunger and suffering they encountered in the jungles.

Jani Arnaiz, PDI Visayas Bureau

Illegal timber seized

TACLOBAN CITY—Close to P1 million worth of illegally cut timber was seized during separate operations in Eastern Visayas early this month. Leonardo Sibbacula, Department of Environment and Natural Resources regional director, said 35,286 board feet of hot lumber worth P931,150 were seized in three separate operations by a raiding team composed of policemen, DENR personnel and Army troops. The biggest haul was in Costa Brava, San Jose District in this city where about 30,000 board feet of *lauan* and *yakal* worth about P755,000 were seized. Some 1,806 board feet of lauan flitches worth P47,150 were also seized in Barangay Tenani, Paranas, Samar; and around 3,460 board feet worth P129,000 seized in San Jorge town, Samar.

Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau

New airport system

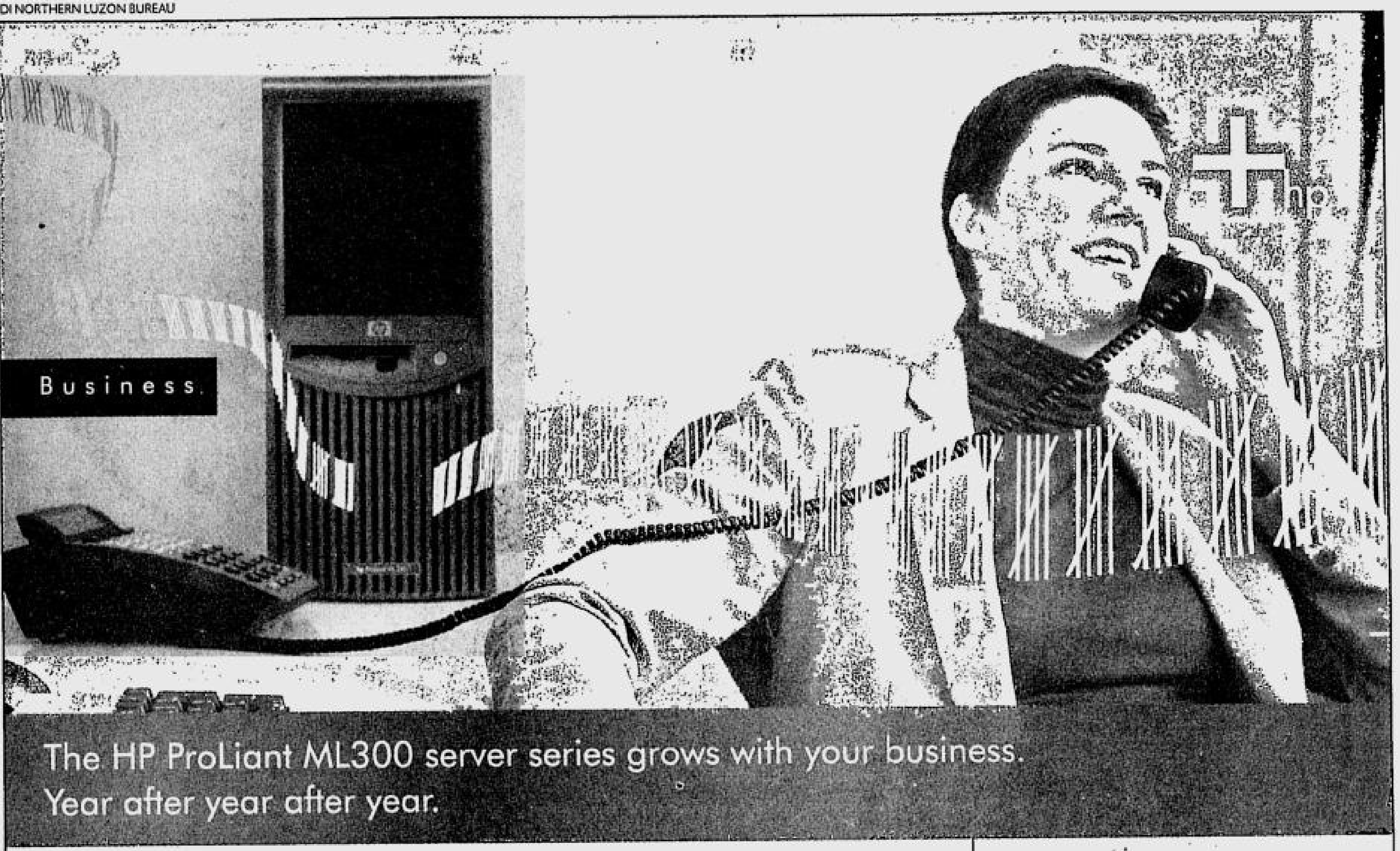
DUMAGUETE CITY—A new system has been set up at the airport here to provide arriving passengers a relaxing and worry-free check out from the arrival and baggage claim area until they get rides to the city. The system is the innovation of the Negros Oriental Investments Promotion Council and the Negros Oriental Chamber of Commerce and Industry in an effort to make the airport "investor-friendly." Regardless of the number of passengers, tricycles can only charge a maximum amount of P50 from the airport to the city's bus terminal. Car rental companies are no longer allowed to solicit passengers at the arrival area. Instead, they line up their cars based on the order in which they arrived.

Alex V. Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau

Countdown for Justice

WAPILE

IT is exactly 540 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.



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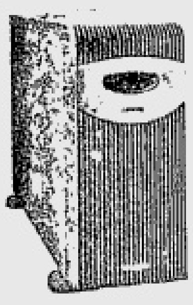

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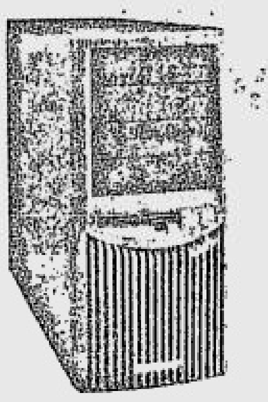

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EDSA DEATH HOLE

Firms told to put up stronger barriers

By Luige del Puerto, Margaux Ortiz, and Christine Paita

THE ACCIDENT in Mandaluyong City, where a jeepney full of passengers fell in a 70-foot excavated site on Edsa, has raised questions about the state of deep construction sites in Metro Manila.

The city also suspended the work permit of construction firm Globe Asiatic, pending investigation, according to Conrad Ansiado, city engineer.

Mandaluyong Mayor Benjamin Abalos Jr. yesterday said that the city will require construction firms to add more safety measures and properly fence off the deep holes.

"Globe Asiatic had a fence and another steel support (at the excavated site), but they did not hold," Abalos said. "What happened was really an accident, but maybe we could strengthen the fences."

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday noted that the National Building Code does not require building owners to put up ram-proof barriers or railings while their buildings are under construction.

Fernando said that although Globe Asiatic was not at fault, he would still ask the Department of Public Works and Highways to review the existing code.

Mandaluyong officials are now studying the possibility of requiring construction firms to post bonds, which may be forfeited in favor of the city if construction is not finished according to an agreed plan.

Abalos said that the money may then be used to fill up the deep holes.

There is one such hole on Ortigas Avenue corner Edsa, near the Securities and Exchange Commission building.

Abalos said the city is set to compel the construction firm that dug the hole to fill it up. He said the excavation has been around for two years.

Eight people on Saturday night were killed when their jeepney lost control after it was sideswiped by a speeding minibus, according to one of the survivors.

The jeepney fell in the shaft, which was deep enough to fit a 5-story building.

The victims came from a prayer meeting in Quezon City and were on their way home to Muntinlupa City.

The Destura family lost three of their own in the tragedy, including jeepney driver Reynaldo Destura, his mother Salvacion, and son Rey Ryan.

Seven-year-old Clarence Destura survived. *With a report from Edgar Allan Sembrano, trainee*

ON BENDED KNEES
Suspected car thief Leonardo Hilardo, a native of Leyte, goes down on his knees to beg the forgiveness of Florencio Castillo, a member of the national police's Traffic Management Group, in Camp Crame, Quezon City. RUDY ESPERAS

METROBRIEFS

Cop, lover get life

THE PASAY City Regional Trial Court yesterday sentenced to life imprisonment SPO3 Rolando Sumulong and his live-in partner, Rowena Villanueva, for drug pushing. Sumulong, formerly with the Western Police District, and Villanueva were arrested in August 1999 during a buy-bust operation by police Narcotics Group agents near the Heritage Hotel in Pasay City. About 500 grams of shabu worth P500,000 were seized from the couple. ***Christine Paita***

Silenced over peace

WAITER Genaro Arbolado, 43, of 1130 Peñafrancia St., Paco, Manila, only wanted peace and quiet but was instead silenced forever on Sunday by a rowdy stranger. A neighbor, Romart Merhan, was celebrating his birthday with loud singing at 8:15 p.m. when Arbolado asked him and his group to keep their voices down. The request did not sit well with guest Edwin Francisco, 20, who shot Arbolado with a homemade shotgun after an argument. ***Leila Salaverria***

Light bulb thief

GERONIMO Gungon, 32, of Matabong Street, Brgy. San Agustin, Malabon, landed in jail yesterday for stealing a P200 light bulb. Roderick Cataytay, 23, and Levi Congi, 22, were doing maintenance work on lampposts along McArthur Bridge in Ermita when Gungon ran off with one of the bulbs. ***Tarra Quismundo***

Stabbed with nail

TRICYCLE driver Rodolfor Ruiz, 42, of Villa Tupaz, Barangay San Joaquin, Pasig City, was drunk when he engaged a nephew to a fist fight at about 9 p.m. Sunday. Another nephew, who was only 14 years old, tried to stop the fight. Outboxed, Ruiz took out a six-inch nail and tried to stab his nephew with it. But because he was drunk, he stabbed the minor instead. ***Luige del Puerto***

Lawman's death spurs WPD chief to reactivate anti-crime unit

By Leila Salaverria

P01 MICHAEL Dennis Corpuz on Sunday night came face to face with his killers when he stopped and checked a taxi in Manila.

Corpuz, 32, of the Sta. Monica precinct, was gunned down by four unidentified men in a white taxi on A. Vasques Street near the corner of Gen. Malvar Street in Malate, at around 9:30 p.m.

The death of the Manila policeman has prompted Western Police District director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong to reactivate the local anti-crime task force.

Bulaong said that with the unit reactivated, he is hoping to curb the expected rise of robberies and other street crimes this coming Christmas.

SP02 Danilo Vidad said that Corpuz was patrolling the Malate area on board a scooter when he saw the white cab with four male passengers.

Vidad said Corpuz hailed the taxicab because of the suspicious men and signaled the driver to pull over on A. Vasques Street.

Corpuz alighted from his scooter and, as he was approaching the cab, the suspects fired at him several times.

The suspects immediately drove off toward Gen. Malvar Street while bystanders took Corpuz to the Ospital ng Maynila. He was declared dead on arrival, Vidad said.

Manila policemen already have orders to do everything they could to catch Corpuz's killers, said WPD spokesperson Chief Insp. Gerry Agunod.

He said the WPD would also recommend the posthumous promotion of Corpuz to the National Capital Region Police Office.

Agunod said that aside from reactivating the anti-crime unit, officials have also tapped the Special Weapons and Tactics team to join the anti-crime drive.

Bus detectives would also be sent out to deter robberies in public utility vehicles, Agunod added.

PESA

Missing

RUBEN D. Pesa, 55, has been missing since Oct. 13.

Pesa was last seen wearing an avocado green Polo Barong, black pants and leather shoes.

Pesa stands 5-foot-1, weighs 160 lbs., and has a fair complexion.

For any information, please call the NDC Building, 116 Tordesillas Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City at telephone numbers 892-1251 and 818-9801. You may also call (0917) 839-3130 and (0917) 826-6642.

Amores; 35

FREDERICK "Erick" A. Amores, a technical director of broadcast network ABS-CBN, died of brain cancer at the St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City on Oct 30, 2003.

He was 35.

Amores is survived by wife Marly, and sons Erickson and Kenneth; parents Johnny and Cely; brothers, sister, in-laws, nephews and nieces.

His remains lie in state at Premier Suite 2, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati, and will be transferred to the St. Mary Magdalene Church in Pililla, Rizal at 8 a.m. today. Interment will be on Nov. 6 at 2 p.m. at the Amores private cemetery in Pililla.

Dela Cruz; 66

AVELINO Laxina dela Cruz of Guadalupe, Makati City, died yesterday. He was 66.

He is survived by his wife, Remedios dela Cruz, and children Ana Rhea and Romel Arcega, Rodney, Aleli and Renedette.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe. Interment will be on Nov. 8 at 11 a.m. at the Heritage Memorial Park, Fort Bonifacio.

Women are more honest than men

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE WOMEN state auditors whose group picture and story were front-page stuff in yesterday's INQUIRER are the source of pride of the Commission on Audit, which is not exactly known for honestly auditing government finances and public utilities.

Yes, many COA auditors assigned in corrupt government offices are not the epitome of honesty. They have become part of the corrupt system.

So it was exhilarating to read about COA state auditors Edna Saluguban, Elena Agustin, Raquel Gorgonio, Magdalena Soriano, Angelita Aquino, Ludy de Leon, Nelia Velleza, Lourdes Moran and Cheryll Apalisoc receiving awards for being honest. The Civil Service Commission bestowed the Pag-asa ng Bayan awards on eight of the nine women.

Apalisoc received the Presidential Dangal ng Bayan award and a cash prize of P100,000.

* * *

The eight female auditors, who were dubbed "Powerpuff Girls" of COA, did not succumb to pressure from the Manila Electric Co. when they reviewed the power firm's books.

Because of these ladies, Meralco is now paying back what it overcharged its customers.

Apalisoc was responsible for making some big electric cooperatives in the country refund their customers. She found that these electric cooperatives were also overcharging their customers.

* * *

Government workers being underpaid, these ladies could have succumbed to the temptation of receiving oodles and oodles of money from the country's biggest power firm, but they did not. This, despite the fact that they, too, have needs.

The eight angels who audited Meralco still take the jeepney in going to work when they could each have received from the power firm a Mercedes Benz plus millions of cash. Meralco is now paying back its customers P28.15 billion. So, it would not mind parting with tens of millions of pesos in order not to lose P28.15 billion.

Apalisoc, on the other hand, still goes to work in a rickety old car.

One of the COA ladies said she used the government prize money she and others shared in paying old debts. Another showed off a crumpled raffle ticket that she said might be an honest source of money.

How very touching!

* * *

But wait, why wasn't there a single male among the CSC awardees?

This is not to insult all their male counterparts at the COA, but there probably wasn't one honest enough for such an award. That is, not just yet but perhaps in the future.

Meanwhile, the male state auditors at the COA will have to do something to deserve the award.

* * *

This is only my personal observation, but generally, women are more honest than men.

Despite that myth about Eve influencing Adam at the Garden of Eden to partake of the Forbidden Fruit, women are stronger than men in resisting the temptation of cheating their employers, being unfaithful to their partners and not returning a lost item to its owner, among others.

Why? Because it's probably a woman's nature to be honest and faithful.

* * *

It's generally difficult to bribe, say, a woman law enforcer because she most likely has simple needs. Unlike her male counterpart, she doesn't go to beerhouses or massage parlors, she doesn't gamble or raise two families. A woman enforcer only has a single family to look after.

That's why most bosses, including this one, prefer women to men when it comes to the nitty-gritty handling of delicate work that doesn't require brute strength.

And in the brain department, the women are more gifted than men.

Example: At the Philippine Military Academy, which used to be a male domain, women always grab slots in the list of the top 10 graduating cadets. This, even when males greatly outnumber females at the 100-year-old academy that opened its portals to women only a few years ago.

* * *

But, oh, when a woman becomes dishonest, she's worse than the most depraved of men!

I've seen this in the Bureau of Internal Revenue. I've seen this in the Bureau of Customs. I've seen this in the Philippine National Police.

In short, when a woman becomes bad, she goes all the way. There's no middle ground.

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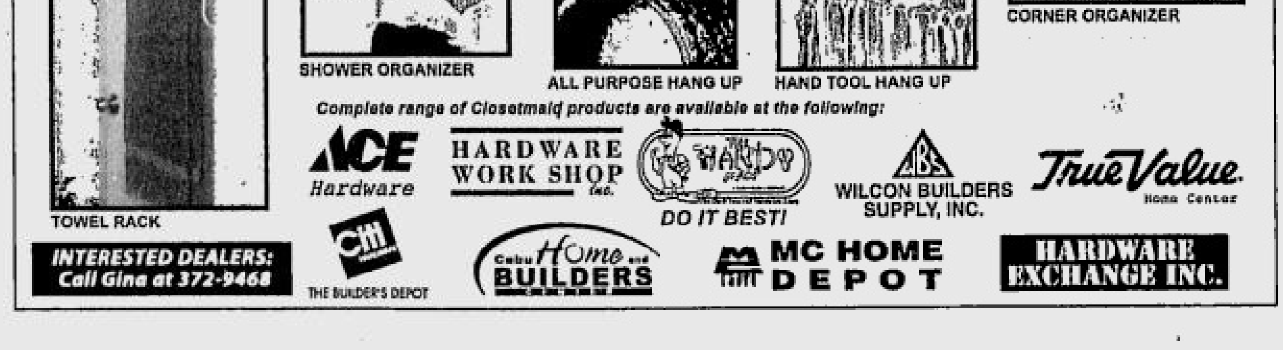

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Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

Tondo hit by new gastro outbreak

By Tarra Quismundo

IT HAPPENED again.

Exactly one week after hundreds of Tondo residents were stricken by acute gastroenteritis, a new upsurge in the cases of the water-borne disease were reported in the same area in Manila.

Clemente San Gabriel, Manila City Health Department (MCHD) administrative officer, said a "second wave" of the outbreak hit on Thursday, Oct. 30.

As of Sunday, a total of 237 more people had gone to hospitals in the city complaining of vomiting, stomach pains and diarrhea.

The figure brings to 576 the number of people from 11 barangays in Tondo reported to have been stricken by acute gastroenteritis since Oct. 23.

Initially, 339 persons were diagnosed with acute gastroenteritis during the period from Oct. 23 to Oct. 27.

San Gabriel said they had yet to confirm whether the new cases were related to the initial case of water contamination in areas along Velasquez, Raxabago, Tayabas, Capulong and other nearby streets in Tondo.

He, however, hinted at improper service by the Maynilad Water Services Inc., the water service provider in Manila, as the cause of the new outbreak.

He disclosed that laboratory tests done by the local health department on samples taken on Oct. 27, or prior to the second wave of the outbreak, indicated an absence of chlorine in the water system in the affected areas.

But Maynilad flatly denied that the chlorine content in the water they were supplying in Tondo had fallen below standards.

In an interview, Jess Matubis, Maynilad corporate communications manager, stressed that the quality of the water they were providing in Tondo "passed" the standards set by the Department of Health. (See box story.)

Maynilad has always maintained that the level of chlorine, which kills germs in the water supply, has even surpassed national and international standards.

Rafael Alunan III, Maynilad president, however, explained Friday that the low level of residual chlorine found by the MCHD might have been due to the dissipation of chlorine during the disinfection process.

This developed as the Bantay Tubig Peoples Action Network, a multi-sectoral coalition, said Maynilad should be held liable for the outbreak.

At the same time, the Center for Environmental Concerns—Philippines accused the water firm of inefficiency, as it hit the failure of the government's policy of privatizing water utility services.

Meanwhile, Manila Mayor Joselito Atienza Jr. said yesterday that their main concern now was to help the victims and not find fault.

"Today, we are working on victims to save them," Atienza said.

He added City Hall and Maynilad were working on "corrective measures to eradicate gastroenteritis."

Maynilad digs deeper

THE MAYNILAD Water Services Inc. yesterday said it was conducting two independent investigations with the Department of Health and Manila Health Department to unlock the mystery surrounding the gastroenteritis outbreak in Tondo.

This would be done as Maynilad assigns five mobile chlorinators in the area, intensifies its leak repair and disconnection of illegal connections, increases water pressure to flush contaminated pipes and rations water to the affected residents.

The water firm said its water was safe and potable unless and until water pipes were sabotaged through illegal connections and booster pumps. *Tina Santos*

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MMDA pushes ban on tinted windows

By Margaux Ortiz

ALARMED over the rise in robbery and holdup incidents inside public utility vehicles (PUVs), the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority is now pushing for the strict implementation of the ban on tinted windows.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said in a press conference yesterday that such a ban would enable the police and MMDA men to monitor activities inside PUVs.

Fernando said they were giving public vehicles a week to remove their tints.

"We will start removing the tints of apprehended vehicles by next week," Fernando warned.

He also said they would be imposing additional penalties for operators and drivers who refuse to cooperate as soon as they are able to pass an ordinance on the tint ban.

Fernando added they would be conducting special training on the proper removal of tints so as not to damage the windows.

"We are just re-implementing an old memorandum of the Land Transportation Office," he said.

He said the memorandum, issued on April 17, 1978, prohibited the use of tinted glass, blinds, curtains and any other device which would obstruct the view from the outside into the interiors of motor vehicles in order to deter crimes.

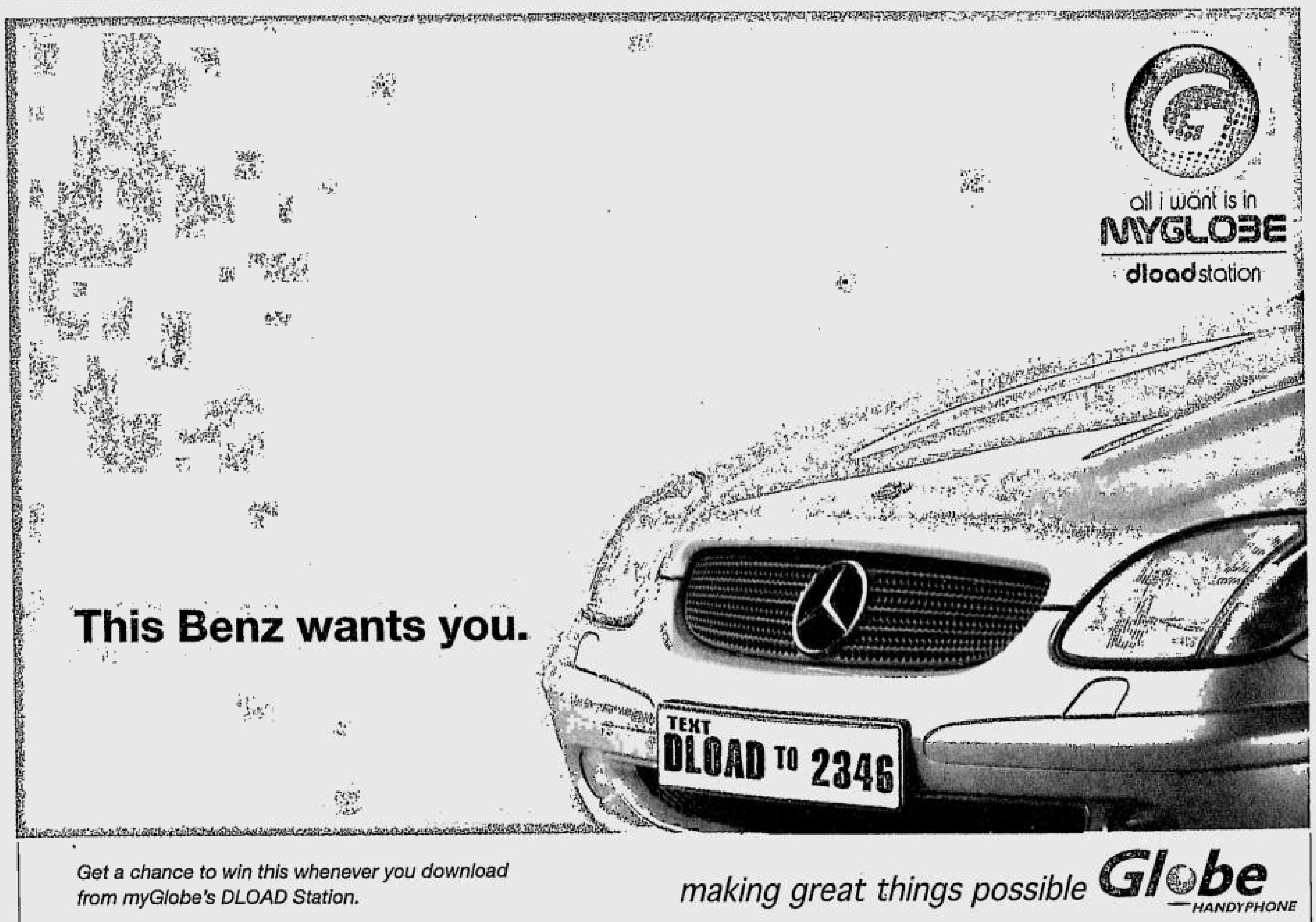
The same memorandum allowed the tinting of the upper portions of the windshield and rear glasses, "provided that such tinting will not exceed six inches in width for heavy and light vehicles, or four inches for bantam vehicles."

It also said the use of curtains, blinds, or other devices at the rear glass shall be allowed during sunny days only, provided a space in the middle is left open.

Curtains and/or blinds can be used on side windows on sunny days, but only on the side of the vehicle directly exposed to the heat of the sun.

But the use of totally tinted glass, whether with one-way or two-way tint, is prohibited.

It also warned on the use of curtains and blinds on more than one side of the vehicle on sunny days, and on any side at night.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Payatas folk left out in the cold

By Tina Santos

INSTEAD of visiting their departed loved ones in the cemeteries, about 2,000 urban poor families in Payatas, Quezon City spent the long holiday weekend looking for a place to stay.

Their houses, which used to stand on a privately-owned lot on Lanzones Street, had been demolished, leaving them homeless and forcing most of them to stay on the streets.

The residents claimed that the demolition crew came on Thursday afternoon and started tearing down their shanties until Nov. 1.

Even the churches there were not spared from the demolition, which the residents claimed as illegal as they did not receive any notice of eviction.

Destroyed by the demolition crew were the Church of the Nazarene, the Golden Heart Church and Pansandaigdigang Simbahang Espiritwal ng Singco Vocales sa Bathalang Buhay A-E-I-O-U (PSESVBB-AEIOU).

"The demolition crew came with the members of the SWAT and policemen armed to the teeth. We were not given any notice... they just started tearing down our houses," said Mother Celia Pena Segovia, a priestess of PSESVBB-AEIOU, whose house was among the first to be razed by the demolition crew.

Barangay Payatas chair Rose Dadulo said she was shocked at the presence of the demolition crew, adding she too was not informed.

"They coordinated with the barangay officials of Barangay Commonwealth because they claimed it was within their jurisdiction," Dadulo said. "But it is within my jurisdiction and I'm hurt because the people have no place to stay."

No comprehensive SEA Games coverage

Jemah TV gets right to telecast Games action

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THERE won't be a comprehensive television coverage of the Philippine campaign in the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games next month.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit confirmed yesterday that it has awarded the right to cover the SEAG to Jemah Television, an outfit which releases foreign movies and TV shows through local networks.

Dayrit didn't say how much Jemah TV, headed by Marc Roces and Freddie Infante, paid for the exclusive coverage rights, although sources estimated it to cost no less than P30 million.

The POC chief didn't elaborate on the extent of the Jemah TV coverage except to say that it "won't be as comprehensive" as before.

DAYRIT: Mum on amount of exclusive deal.

This is the first time the government station has failed to make a bid for the SEAG coverage.

Aside from the stiff fees asked by the Vietnam organizers, NBN 4 is also having problems with its coverage contract with the PBA.

But Jemah TV's SEAG coverage would still be shown over NBN 4.

The Philippines is hoping to finish at least third place overall in the SEA Games scheduled Dec. 5-12 in the cities of Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh (formerly Saigon) and Haishung.

"There is a problem with communication with the Vietnam organizers who are also asking big fees from carrying outfits," said Gus Villanueva, the POC spokesperson.

He said TV coverage is an important ingredient to the success of the 400-plus Filipino athletes in the sportsfest that will be hosted by the Philippines in 2005.

Biggest for Tim

PARIS—Britain's Tim Henman won the most prestigious title of his career Sunday, beating Romania's Andrei Pavel, 6-2, 7-6 (6), 7-6 (2) in the Paris Masters final and ending a disappointing season on a high note.

Henman threw his arms into the air, applauded on his racket and then chucked it into the crowd after Pavel delivered the championship point into the net. *AP*

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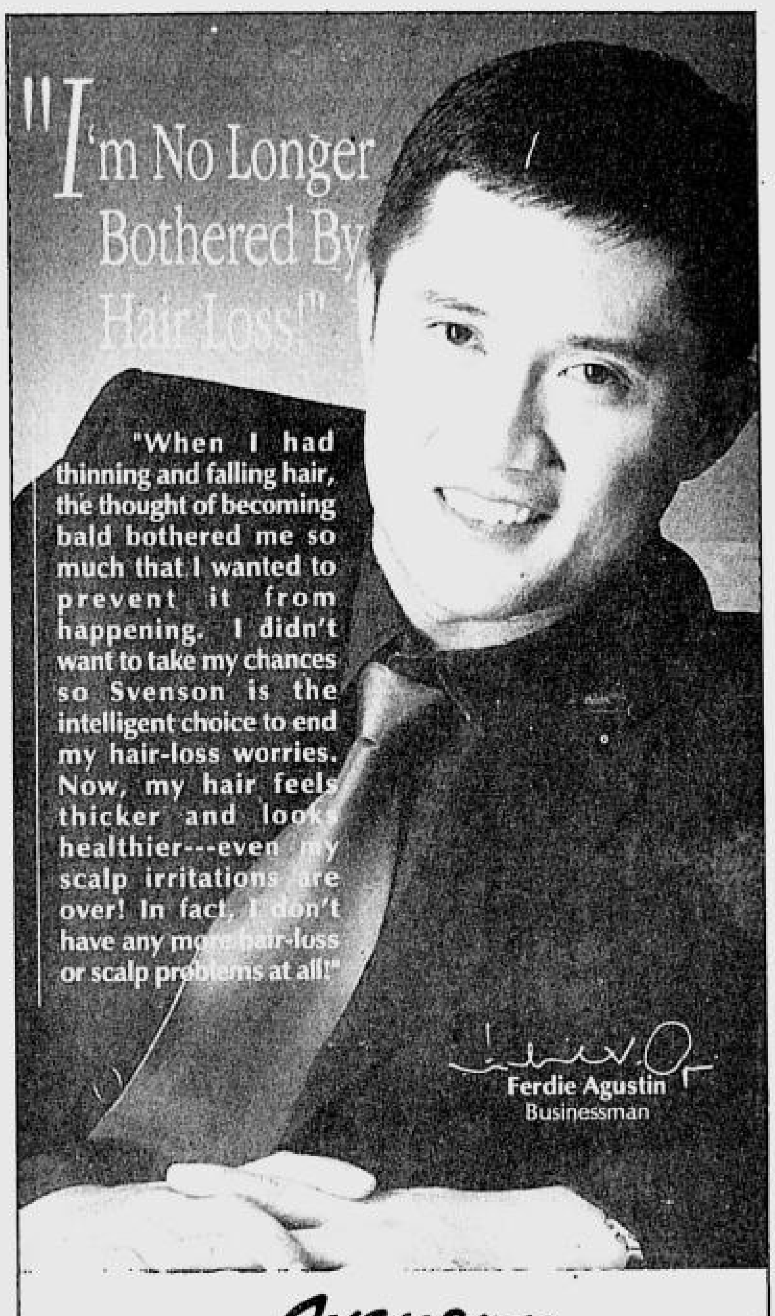
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PBA to tackle Eala proposal

By June Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE Basketball Association Board of Governors again tackles today the proposed new format for next year and the sudden TV coverage pullout of IBC-13.

Commissioner Noli Eala, who wants to replace the current three-conference format with a single-season championship next year, will try to convince the board anew of the viability and efficacy of his proposal.

Some board members have raised the possibility of their players being sidelined for more than five months should their respective teams be eliminated early in the tournament.

Under the proposal, the February-December schedule will be replaced by an October-May timetable that would allow the league to synchronize its calendar with the Fiba and make it possible for PBA stars to play not only in the Asian Games but also in the ABC.

The board is also expected to act decisively on what it termed was a breach of contract by the NBN-IBC consortium for IBC's sudden stoppage of airing the games.

Under the PBA's memorandum of agreement with NBN and IBC, the consortium would air the games on simulcast basis.

The consortium's marketing and finance arm, Summit Sports World Inc., had allegedly failed to come up with at least P30 million to pay its airtime dues with IBC-13.

As a result, the IBC board resigned en masse before abandoning its coverage of the games.

NBN, for its part, now owes the PBA P70 million in payment of coverage rights.

Sources said the PBA is contemplating on forming another television production should NBN fail to honor its financial obligations. *June Navarro*

Pacquiao challenger needs to lick neuro tests in Texas

By Salven L. Lagumbay
Contributor

A CLOUD of uncertainty now hovers over the Nov. 15 Manny Pacquiao-Marco Antonio Barrera mega-bout after the Texas Boxing Commission ruled no license would be issued to the Mexican boxing idol if he fails in today's battery of neurological tests.

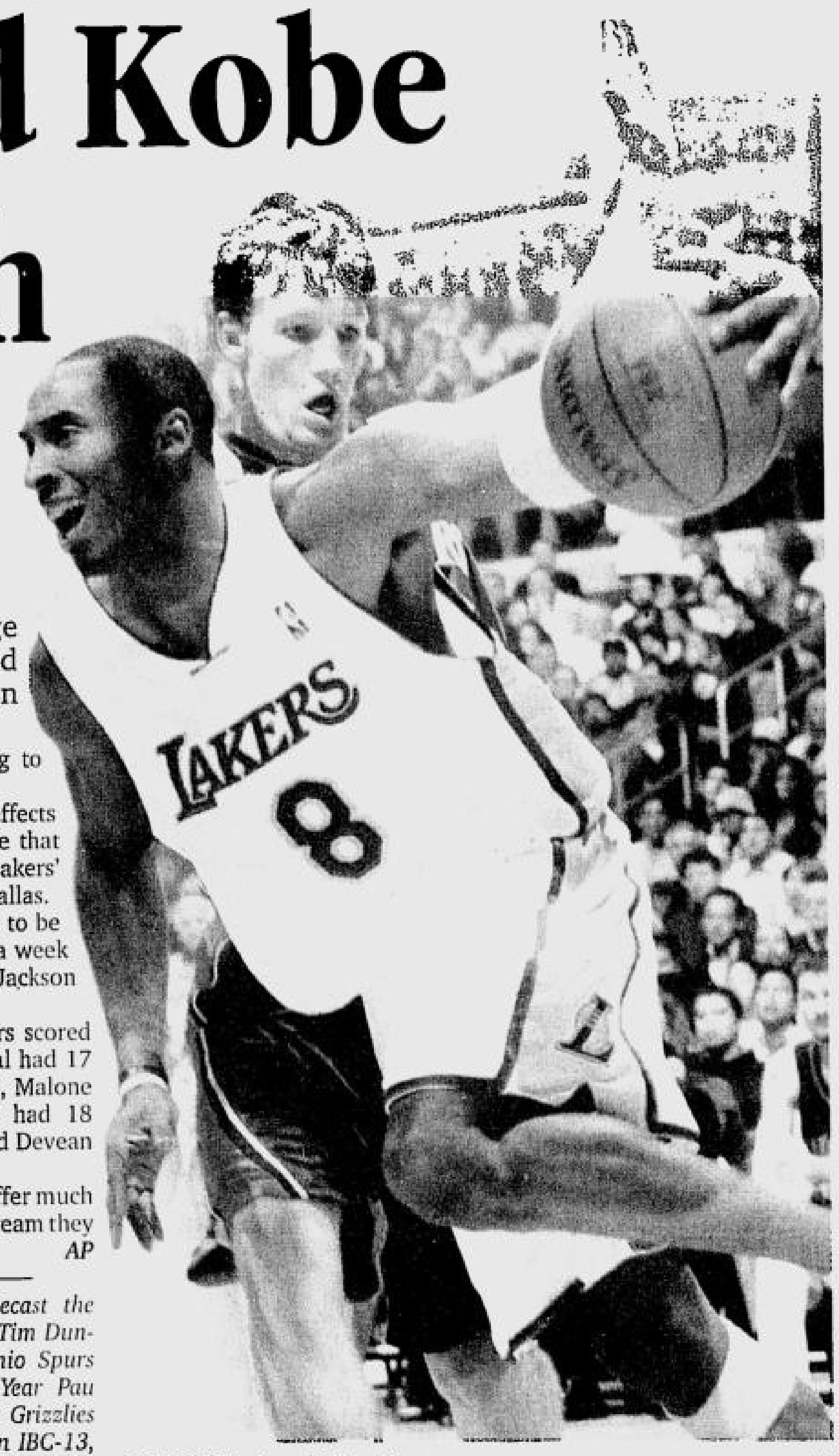
Texas does not require a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) on fighters, but concerns have recently surfaced over Barrera's 1997 brain surgery to repair a congenital defect involving a small group of malformed blood vessels in his brain.

Since that surgery conducted by Ignacio Madrazo, one of Mexico's top neuro-surgeons, Barrera has had numerous MRIs and passed several neurological exams, the latest of which was taken only last Oct. 9 at the University of California Medical Center.

However, Dickie Cole, head of the Texas Boxing Commission, reportedly wants to conduct his agency's own test. Barrera has complied, and is in Houston today for the series of examinations.

If Barrera fails the tests, the Nov. 15 showdown is off.

Troubled Kobe back with a bang


BRYANT flashes old fiery form. AFP

LOS ANGELES—Kobe Bryant received huge cheers in his home debut this season and scored 21 points to lead Los Angeles to an 87-72 win over Golden State.

The Lakers are 3-0 since acquiring All-Stars Karl Malone and Gary Payton in the offseason.

Fans cheered wildly when Bryant made his first jumper on an assist by Shaquille O'Neal. They booed the referee on his behalf in the closing minute when Bryant was called for traveling.

"It doesn't help my game much, but playing at Staples Center makes me feel comfortable," said Bryant, who walked out of the arena holding hands with wife Vanessa.

Bryant played 35 minutes—two less than he did in his first game of the season Saturday night in Phoenix, where he scored 15 points and was greeted by a mix of cheers and boos. He is awaiting trial on sexual assault charges in Colorado.

"He looked pretty good," Warriors guard Avery Johnson said. "Obviously, the explosion is not where it's probably going to be at the end of the season, but he's making his move strong to the basket."

Bryant showed no ill effects from the sore right knee that kept him out of the Lakers' first-game win against Dallas.

"Kobe's energy seems to be a lot better than it was a week ago," Lakers coach Phil Jackson said.

All five Lakers starters scored in double figures. O'Neal had 17 points and 14 rebounds, Malone had 16 points, Payton had 18 points and 11 assists and Devean George had 12 points.

The Warriors didn't offer much of a challenge against a team they beat twice last season. *AP*

Solar Sports will telecast the game pitting NBA MVP Tim Duncan and the San Antonio Spurs against Rookie of the Year Pau Gasol and the Memphis Grizzlies "live" at 9 a.m. today on IBC-13, with a replay at 8 p.m.

SPORTSWATCH

Favored Thais foil Filipina booters

KUALA LUMPUR—The Philippines fell to powerhouse Thailand, 1-4, Sunday night in a four-team women's football invitational tournament here, but remained in strong contention for a medal by virtue of its first-day triumph over host Malaysia. Rhea Penales scored the RP lady booters' lone goal in the 59th minute. The Southeast Asian Games champions Thais led 1-0 at halftime on a goal by Kittiya Thangtham, but they knocked in three more goals in the 52nd, 55th and 80th minutes through Chutima Takorum, Naruman Piamsin and Oranee Saipin. The Filipinos, who beat the Malaysians, 4-1, in the opener, were playing Indonesia at presstime yesterday. According to the PFF, the Filipinos even have a chance to win the tournament if they hurdle the Indons. In Sunday night's other game, Malaysia beat Indonesia, 3-1.

Alban, Alcantara dispute Milo net title

CAGAYAN DE ORO—Juke Alban of Surigao City turned back Marvin Serito of San Beda-Manila, 6-4, 6-3, to forge a title showdown with crowd-favorite Francis Casey Alcantara in the boys' 14-under division of the 2003 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop at the Nazareth Tennis Club here. Alcantara, who edged Efren Macasinag of Digos, 6-2, 2-6, 6-4, will gun for a double in the boys' 12-under against Noelito Pacana in the netfest organized by CTW and supported by Wilson Balls, adidas and NBN-4's Sunday TV show, Sports Kids. Lani Enriquez, of Isabela Tennis Club in Basilan, tangles with local lass Honeymae Gilles, a 6-1, 6-2 victor over Janelle Guanzon, for the girls' 12-under and 14-under crowns. In the unisex 10-under class, Francis Derek Alcantara takes on Gabriel Melendez for the title; Janjie Soquino of Cebu collides with Carlo Estrella for the boys' 18-under crown; and Juv Alban trades strokes with Redeemer Autentico for the boys' 16-under trophy.

Uratex caddies golf reset to February

THE URATEX National Caddies Championship, the annual gathering of the country's leading bag-toters since 1988, has been reset to Feb. 16-20 next year. The tournament, originally scheduled on Nov. 25-28 at the Valley Golf and Country Club, was overtaken by the death of its benefactor and patron, Uratex chairman Robert G. Cheng, last Wednesday. Col. Abe Villanueva, chairman of the championship's organizing committee, said the Cheng family requested the postponement.

Armed forces XIs flex muscle

POWERFUL teams from the armed services blanked their respective opponents in the Globe Super Cup matches in various venues last weekend. Air Force routed Union FC, 6-0, Army downed Ateneo, 3-0, and Navy defeated Santo Tomas, 2-0, as the AFP teams kept their unblemished records in the tourney. In other matches, Nomads-A nipped Manila All-Japan, 5-4, the Presidents Men whipped MIT-Lions, 6-3, Mendiola outlasted Sunken Garden, 1-0, Nomads-B ripped Onze, 3-0, and Pasargad zapped University of Makati, 12-0.

Carrasco elected to Asian triathlon body

CHENNAI, India—Tom Carrasco, president of Triathlon Association of the Philippines (TRAP), was elected senior vice president of the Asian Triathlon Confederation (ASTC) here the other day. Carrasco, an executive board member of the Philippine Olympic Committee, also retained his position as Asian representative to the International Triathlon Union (ITU). TRAP secretary general Red Dumuk, meanwhile, was reelected to the ASTC technical committee. Carrasco, an incumbent member of the ASTC executive board, and Dumuk will serve for four years in their respective posts starting Nov. 30. "My elevation to the second highest position in the Asian governing body for triathlon is a recognition of what TRAP has been doing to promote and develop triathlon," Carrasco said.

Agusan Nat'l High bags Coke crown

BUTUAN CITY—Agusan National High banked on Jeramiah Clemente's two goals to nip Butuan City School of Arts and Trade, 2-1, recently and bag the local Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 football title here. Clemente, who was eventually named the tourney's most valuable player, struck in the ninth and 44th minutes to give his team a 2-0 lead. Rolando Tecson saved BCSAT from a shutout with a goal in the 59th. Libertad National High finished third by beating Villa Kanonga, 4-1, in the other match. Rodrigo Miranda scored all Libertad goals. Agusan National High crushed Villa Kanonga, 10-0, and BCSAT nosed out Libertad, 2-1, to advance to the finals. Kieth Mordeno starred for Agusan with four goals.

Volley league meet up tomorrow

THE ORGANIZATIONAL meeting of the 10th Women's Volleyball League (WVL) will be held at 3 p.m. tomorrow at the Quezon City Sports Club. Last year's champions—Colegio San Agustin (elementary) and San Antonio de Padua College, Laguna (high school)—and other interested schools are invited to attend. Registration forms will be distributed and plans for the coming league will be discussed during the meeting which will be presided by tournament commissioner Florentino "Kid" and his assistant, Monica Jorge.

Patakbong Pinoy goes to Olongapo

THE BEST runners from Olongapo City are expected at the starting line when the third leg of the Beam-Zest-O Patakbong Pinoy fires off in this progressive city in Zambales on Nov. 16. Unlike the opening leg in Manila and the second leg in San Luis, Batangas, the Olongapo race is open only to the city's students and residents. The 5-km race is organized by Media Runners and Sports Promotions, in coordination with the Olongapo City government, headed by Mayor Kate Gordon. The winners of the men's and women's races take home P3,000, with the second and third placers in both divisions pocketing P2,000 and P1,000, respectively. The biggest school delegation wins P5,000. For inquiries, call Sheila Reyes at (047) 2225401. Deadline for registration is Nov. 14.

Top Luzon breeders vie in Roligon derby

MORE than 62 quality fights are on tap as Luzon's top breeders compete in today's Luzon Gamecock Breeders Association 7-Stag Derby at the Roligon Mega Cockpit beginning at 6 p.m. Seeing action in today's elimination round is the first batch of participants. Round two is on Thursday while the finale is on Saturday. Among the early favorites are first leg champion Mauro Prieto of Palawan (Anito entry), Engr. Jun Sevilla, William Go, Benjie Lim, hotelier Biboy Enriquez, Sonny Lagon, Boy Gamilla, Ucap president Raymond Velayo, Emoy Gorgonia, LGBA president Boy Diaz, Rep. Lawrence Wacnang, Blandy Tolentino, R. Tan, Ram Lopez, Ricky Castillo, Eddie Lee and Jess de Vera. Sponsors are Washout Shampoo, Pitfighter Feeds, Enertone, Derby Ace, Amtyl 500, Supremo Pellets and Strike Power Pellets. The LGBA Breeder of the Year 2003 will be known after four derbies, all of which are slated at Roligon. For inquiries, call Roligon at 833-2275 and 833-1638 or the LGBA secretariat at 911-8969.

Ucap, NCA big guns troop to Las Piñas

BIG-TIME cockers will converge at the new Las Piñas Cockpit this Friday for the JBB Blue Blade 5-Stag Derby to be hosted by United Cockers Association of the Philippines stalwart Sonny Lagon. Submission of weights is on Thursday from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. at LPC. Interested parties may call 873-1040. Coming in full force are members of Ucap and NCA, among them Stagfighter of the Year winners Butch Macasaet and former ambassador Dandling Cojuangco, Patrick Antonio, Mayor Jessie Viceo, Gerry Ramos, Biboy Enriquez, Tony Lasala, Benjie Lim, Pol Estrellado, Gov. Ito Yñares, Rep. Rudy Albano, Mayor Nene Aguilar, Jet Fernando, Alex Tang and Ucap president Raymond Velayo. The entry fee is P55,000, with the guaranteed cash prize set at P1.5 million. A 5-cock derby is also slated at LPC on Dec. 13 to be hosted by Gerry Ramos.

Welcoat faces Sunkist in PBL opener

GAMES SATURDAY (*Pasig Sports Center*)
1:30 p.m.—Opening Ceremony
2 p.m.—Sunkist vs Welcoat Paints
4 p.m.—Fash Liquid Detergent vs Montana Pawnshop

FASH Liquid Detergent is going for back-to-back titles while Welcoat Paints is dead-set on reliving its glory days.

With both teams undergoing major shakeups, expect another classic showdown between these two giants in the 2003 PBL Platinum which starts this Saturday at the Pasig Sports Center.

Welcoat Paints takes on Sunkist-University of Santo Tomas in the opening game of the inaugural doubleheader at 2 p.m. while Fash Liquid Detergent collides with Montana Pawnshop at 4 p.m.

Out to erase the bitter memory of finishing sixth in the Sunkist Unity Cup, the Paint Masters have acquired James Yap of the University of the East, 6-foot-7 Ervin Sotto, 6-foot-7 JR Reyes of UP and Nelbert Omolon. They have also reactivated the cat-quick Paul Artadi.

These top players join an array of veterans that include the vastly improved Jercules Tangkay, Mark Pingris, Willie Wilson and Mac Cuan.

Coach Leo Austria is convinced that his team is definitely much stronger and competitive than the one they had in the first conference.

"We are more competitive now because of the presence of Yap, Artadi, Sotto and Reyes. I just hope they can adapt to our system fast," said Austria. "We now have the ceiling with Reyes and Sotto around."

'To a lasting friendship'

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THE YEAR I met Robert Cheng was maybe in 1984. He was drinking beer at the old clubhouse of Capitol Hills in Quezon City. He was at another table, in the company of his friends.

"That's Robert Cheng over there," said Jake P. Ayson. "That's the guy who owns the famous Uratex foam."

Jake and I were at another table drinking beer, too. Before I knew it, I got invited to Robert Cheng's table. It was Robert Cheng himself who requested me to join him if only for a bottle or two.

"Here's to my new friend," he said, referring to me, as he raised his beer bottle to his friends. Then he said to me, "Please raise your bottle, too, Al?"

I did. And from then on, we became beer buddies.

We hit it off immediately. The man was a regular guy, a most humble fella despite the riches that adorned his name.

After I had made my first gulp to celebrate our first meeting, Robert Cheng ordered six more bottles of San Miguel beer. All six were for me.

"How come you ordered six?" I said to him.

"Because I and my friends are on our seventh bottle now," he said. "You gotta catch up with us."

He felt comfortable with me all at once and yet, this was just our first meeting. Although I was overwhelmed by his warm reception, I still had this uneasy feeling, which Robert Cheng immediately noticed.

"Oh, Al, don't worry if you feel like not wanting to take on all six," he said. "It's just my way of saying here's to a lasting friendship."

I ended up drinking all six in a pace that was faster than usual.

"I appreciate that very much," said Robert Cheng. "I wish we could have more sessions like this."

It was the start of a friendship that would have lasted till the end of time—until Wednesday, Oct. 29, when Robert Cheng breathed his last.

"He collapsed while hitting range balls at the Maru Driving Range in Quezon City," Jake said to me Wednesday evening at Rockwell's Via Mare Oyster Bar.

I almost choked on my first oyster upon hearing that.

"They took him to that small hospital along Commonwealth Avenue—what's the name of the hospital again?" Jake said.

"Malvar?"

"Yes, Malvar," Jake said. "I just got a call from Col. Abe Villanueva that our friend Robert Cheng succumbed in that hospital. Heart attack."

Robert Cheng, a certified millionaire, and I, a certified Beatlemaniac, have had many occasions of drinking sprees. One such occasion was held at his Tagaytay vacation house, which sits on a ridge overlooking Taal Volcano. After we had watched one round of the Philippine Open at Riviera in 1999 (Frankie Miñoza won that one), we retreated to that house and had barbecued beef and chicken and drank beer, wine, brandy and back to beer till the small hours of the morning.

The last time I saw Robert Cheng alive was November last year, during the last day of the 14th Uratex National Caddies Golf Championship at Valley.

As you know, Robert Cheng founded the only tournament in the world that has caddies as its exclusive participants. Caddies all over the archipelago are entered in the tournament free of charge—free transportation, food and lodging. Every caddie is a winner at the end of the tournament as every participant goes home lugging either a TV set or a rice cooker, not to mention some money for the missus waiting back home. Past champions have gone on to become celebrities in their own right.

Eerily, after Jake P. Ayson had broken the sad news on Wednesday, I remembered, almost in an instant, that in that same place at Rockwell, about two years ago, Robert Cheng and I, together with former world bowling champion Ollie Ongtawco, were having red wine and fresh oysters at Via Mare.

Oh, how he relished oysters.

Oh, how he relished life.

Oh, how he relished the times he narrated his humble beginnings—he pushed carts to buy empty cans and bottles and old newspapers and resold them for profits just enough to tide him by.

"Indeed, those were the days, Al," he'd say, raising his glass to the heavens.

We weep, Robert, for the days that you will not be with us again due to your much-lamented departure. Nonetheless, enjoy your new life only our good God can bestow upon his children.

You will be missed.

Gutsy Goosen biggest winner

PALM HARBOR, Florida—Retief Goosen won the Chrsyler Championship, although he wasn't the only one who left Innisbrook with a big smile.

GOOSEN

Briny Baird won a spot in his first Tour Championship by finishing third, earning more than enough money to climb into the top 30 on the money list.

Jeff Sluman is going to the Masters, despite a bogey-bogey finish that caused him to believe he came up one stroke and a few dollars short of getting into the top 40.

Glen Hnatiuk of Canada got into the top 125 and keeps his card for next year.

The drama was all over the scoreboard Sunday, but not at the top.

Goosen took care of that with back-to-back birdies, starting on the par-3 13th when he backed off his crucial tee shot because he saw a helicopter zooming into his line of sight.

Goosen, who closed with a 1-under 70 for a three-stroke victory over Vijay Singh, gave a big lift to Tiger Woods, who wasn't even playing.

By holding off a final charge from the big Fijian, Goosen gave Woods an outside chance of winning a record fifth straight PGA Tour money title next week in the Tour Championship.

Singh, who also shot a 70 and got within one stroke of Goosen, could have clinched the money title with a victory at Innisbrook.

Now, it all comes down to the Tour Championship next week in Houston, although the cards are stacked heavily in Singh's favor. He earned $518,400 for finishing second, increasing his lead on the money list to $765,494 with one tournament left. *AP*

PSC sets sights on countrywide sports program

WITH the success of the Mindanao Frienship Games and the Palarong Pambansa, the Philippine Sports Commission is now bent on pursuing its goal for a bigger, countrywide sports development program and promotion

And PSC chair Eric Buhain said achieving the target involves holding the Luzon and Visayas Games to be staged in the mold of the Mindanao Games, and the eventual staging of the Philippine National Championships.

"The groundwork is there, the models are in place and the tools and manpower are on call," said Buhain, referring to efforts by the sports agency to finally stage the Luzon and Visayas Games in 2004.

Both games, and the highly ambitious national championships, were shelved this year because of budgetary constraints. Critics have questioned the wisdom behind the staging of both games despite enthusiastic government support for them.

Buhain said the Palaro staging in Tubod, Lanao del Norte after three postponements was a tribute to President Macapagal-Arroyo's strong political will.

Piñol backs big Kidapawan card

NORTH Cotabato Gov. Manny Piñol yesterday expressed confidence the Nov. 9 "Engkwentro" card in Kidapawan City would generate a big interest among boxing fans and showcase his province's capacity to host a major slugfest.

The mammoth San Miguel Corp.-backed event features WBC International flyweight champ Randy Mangubat's 12-round title defense against local hero Prince Gabi.

Philippine junior lightweight champion Bobby Pacquiao tangles with Fil-Am Arnick Arabala in the main supporting bout.

"We are delighted to host this event. Everything has been set for the biggest boxing spectacle in Mindanao this year," said Piñol.

The 10,000-capacity North Cotabato Provincial Gymnasium will be the venue for the bout, which is presented by the SK Federation of North Cotabato in cooperation with the Fort Stone Sports Promotion.

Mangubat (31-18-11, 14 KOs) will defend his WBC title for the fourth time since 2000 when he won it over Korean Kong Kwan-Kim. Gabi (23-2-1, 19 KOs) makes his first stab at a world title.

Salven L. Lagumbay

Velez shines in Toby's badminton

KARYN Velez of St. Paul's-Pasig bagged the girls' 14-under singles title and shared the doubles crown with her victim yesterday in the Toby's Age-Group Badminton Championships at the SM Megamall Activity Center.

Velez, the country's No. 7 player, downed Janina Paredes of Poveda-VVCC, 11-2, 8-11, 11-3, for her third singles victory this year after the Batang Pinoy in Palawan and Manila Youth Games. She lost the JVC Open 14-under title to Paredes two months ago.

The 13-year-old Velez, who has been training under former national coach Nelson Asuncion for the past five years, later teamed up with Paredes to beat Lisa Encarnacion and Carla Lizardo of Poveda-VVCC, 15-2, 15-7, to claim her third doubles title.

Kevin Tim Ang of Roosevelt-PNP beat teammate Kevin Dalisay, 15-8, 15-4, to rule the boys' 14-under singles in this weeklong event sponsored by adidas, Carlton, Wilson, RSL, Prince, Gosen, KFC, SM Shoemart, 103.5 K-lite, Taraflex and the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

TOBY'S
Juniors

BOYS' 10-and-under doubles champs Rhoniel Hernandez (third from left) and Edrick Lacson on the podium with first runners-up Johan Dee and John Carlo Cagomoc (left) and the third placers. At extreme right is Toby's Sports president Jojo Claudio.

Antonino Gadi of Ateneo and Gerard Certeza of Aquinas won the boys' 14-under doubles over Adrian Pagsanjan and Renz Marion Vivas of MH Del Pilar, 15-8, 15-10.

Gadi and Paredes took the mixed 14-under doubles title over Adrian Pagsanjan and Jacqueline Cudia of MH Del Pilar, 15-8, 15-5.

In the 12-under category, Peter Gabriel Magnaye of PNP was crowned singles champion after posting a 15-1, 7-15, 15-4 victory over Ramon Lorenzo Guerrero of La Salle-Greenhills.

Magnaye and Guerrero defeated Joseph Paredes of LSGH and Kyle Vinarao of Lourdes, 15-6, 15-1, to capture the doubles title.

Bianca Legaspi of OB-VVC outplayed Kristine Padura of Sports Zone, 11-9, 11-2, to win the singles title. Legaspi and Guerrero bagged the mixed doubles title over Abigail Garcia and Timothy Garcia, 15-1, 15-0.

Padura and Ardie Chua of Sports Zone won the girls' doubles title over Abigail Garcia and Charlotte Felix of De La Salle-Zobel, 15-10, 17-15.

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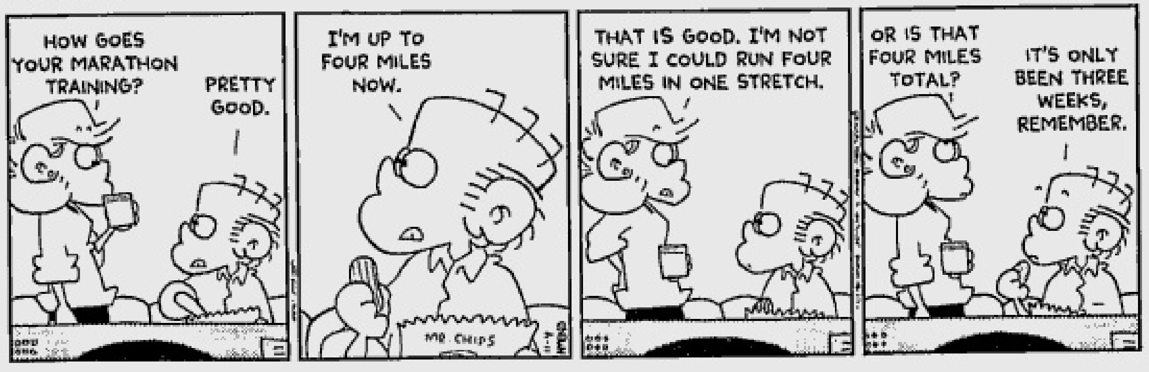
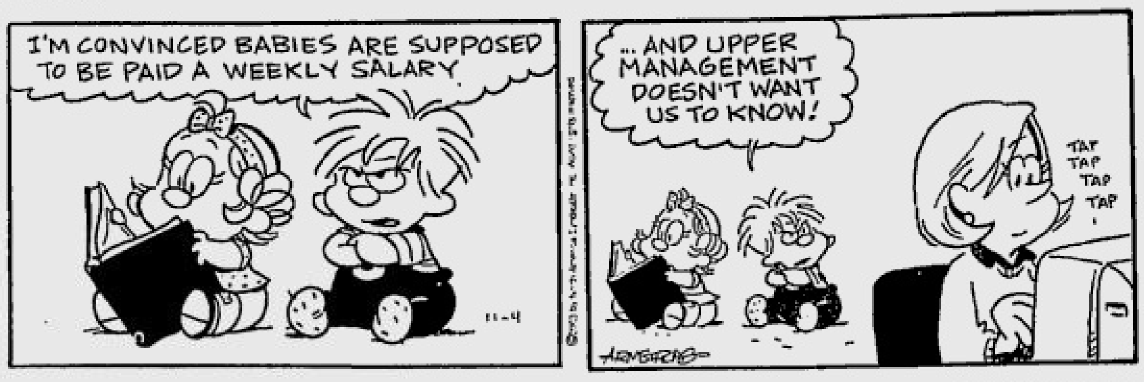
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


HOW GOES YOUR MARATHON TRAINING?
PRETTY GOOD.
I'M UP TO FOUR MILES NOW.
MR. CHIPS
THAT IS GOOD. I'M NOT SURE I COULD RUN FOUR MILES IN ONE STRETCH.
OR IS THAT FOUR MILES TOTAL?
IT'S ONLY BEEN THREE WEEKS, REMEMBER.

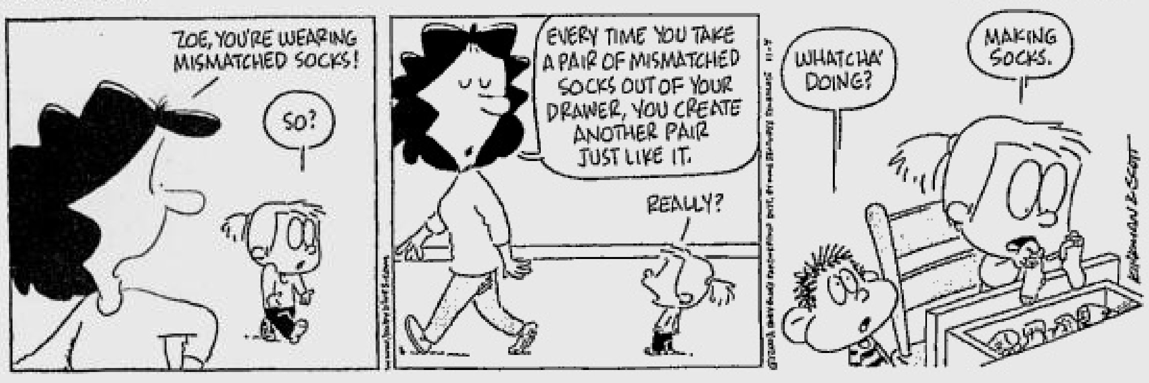
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I'M CONVINCED BABIES ARE SUPPOSED TO BE PAID A WEEKLY SALARY
11-4
...AND UPPER MANAGEMENT DOESN'T WANT US TO KNOW!
TAP TAP TAP TAP
ARMSTRONG

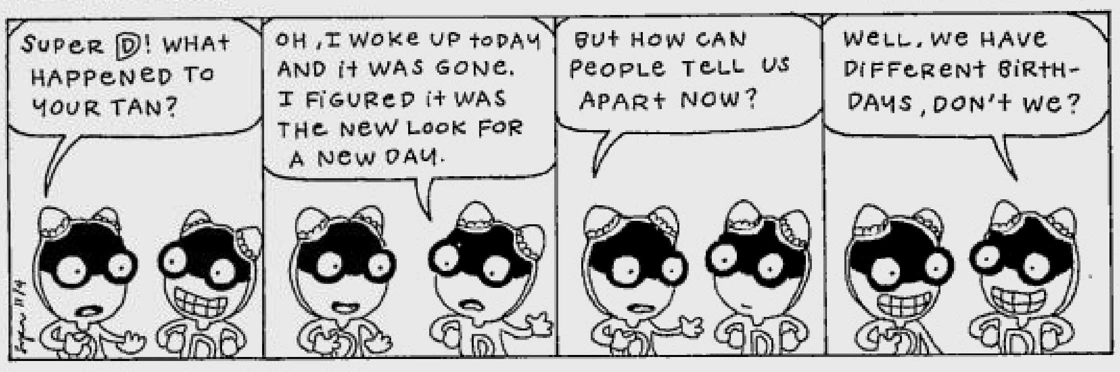
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


ZOE, YOU'RE WEARING MISMATCHED SOCKS!
SO?
EVERY TIME YOU TAKE A PAIR OF MISMATCHED SOCKS OUT OF YOUR DRAWER, YOU CREATE ANOTHER PAIR JUST LIKE IT.
REALLY?
WHATCHA' DOING?
MAKING SOCKS.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


SUPER D! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR TAN?
OH, I WOKE UP TODAY AND IT WAS GONE. I FIGURED IT WAS THE NEW LOOK FOR A NEW DAY.
BUT HOW CAN PEOPLE TELL US APART NOW?
WELL, WE HAVE DIFFERENT BIRTH-DAYS, DON'T WE?

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You appear easygoing and charming; however, you often arouse controversy. Nevertheless, your magnetic personality literally draws people to you. You have a sly sense of humor. You appreciate all kinds of people—all races, all classes. With a strong focus on relationships now, important decisions lie ahead. **Birthdate of:** Doris Roberts, actress; Kathy Griffin, actress; Will Rogers, humorist/folk philosopher.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a very good day for creativity and hunches. On the other hand, it's a poor day to make important decisions or to shop. Trust your intuition.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is an excellent day to talk to friends and groups. However, it's a poor day to agree to a promise or make a commitment. Wait until tomorrow to do so.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Conversations with bosses, parents and authority figures are significant today. However, agree to nothing. Whatever you initiate today will tend not to fulfill its purpose.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a wonderful day for exploratory discussions about politics, religion and philosophical subjects. Do not make specific travel plans today. Wait until tomorrow.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You might want to share or lend something today. If this idea occurs to you, don't do it. Your spontaneous impulses cannot be trusted today. Sleep on it.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You might find conversations with partners and close friends a tad confusing today. However, it's a good day for lighthearted, harmless banter.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Do not agree to anything important at work today. Do not offer deadlines or estimates, or volunteer for anything. Keep it low-key. Whatever you agree to will probably have to be changed later.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a marvelously creative day! You are definitely thinking outside-the-box. See where your imagination leads you. All artistic efforts can be productive, fresh and innovative.

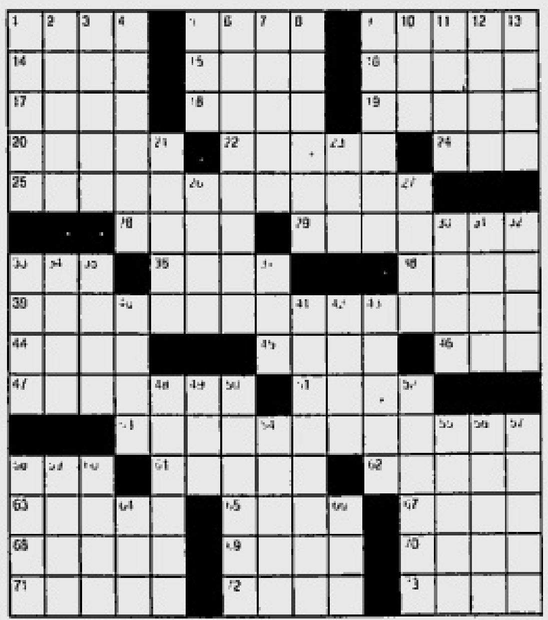
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a poor day to shop for anything—especially family items or domestic purchases. Wait until tomorrow to do this. Whatever you buy today will probably have to be returned.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a very poor day to shop, professionally or personally. Whatever you do today will require later changes and adjustments. Keep this in mind.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): No matter how keen you are to buy something today—don't do it. You can buy it tomorrow. (And when tomorrow comes, you might find you have changed your mind completely!)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): The Moon is in your sign today, but it does not make major aspects to any planet. This is good for social occasions, but very poor for business. Forewarned is forearmed.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA
11/4/03

ACROSS
1 Refs' cousins
5 Washstand pitcher
9 Vibrated
14 Father of France
15 Commuted
16 To the point
17 Engendered
18 Primitive plant
19 Raise in status
20 Atlantic or Pacific
22 Wild
24 Parcel of land
25 Charm school grad's asset
28 Greek portico
29 Slogging away
33 Frequently, in a poem
36 Sound quality
38 __ fixe
39 Wrapping up
44 Baronet's wife
45 Part of TAE
46 Russ. or Lith., once
47 Hot under the collar
51 Soph's residence
53 Succeeding at middle management?
58 Capp and Capone
61 Licit
62 Lake near Reno
63 Quipped
65 False god
67 Stock dish
68 Animate
69 Lose will
70 Erato or Clio
71 Evaluated
72 Chimes in
73 Not aweather

DOWN
1 Violinist's move
2 Thanks, Jacques
3 Groom oneself
4 Family cars
5 Important time
6 Mr. Mozart
7 Outer limits
8 Supplies with new weapons
9 "__ Dallas"
10 Jinx
11 __ Roberts University
12 Christiania, today
13 Etta of the comics
21 Italian P.M. exiled by Mussolini
23 Feel ill
26 Showdown time
27 Wicked
30 Altar assents
31 Monster's loch
32 Will of "The Waltons"
33 Vegas quote
34 Campus Greek house
35 Mild
37 Greek letter
40 Welfare
41 Stars and Stripes
42 Make a pledge
43 Proofreader's symbol
48 Formed
49 WNW's opposite
50 Fingers and toes
52 Noxious emanation
54 Ms. Comaneci
55 Grave robber
56 Family dwelling
57 Plains dwelling
58 Nearly closed
59 Tra followers
60 Rotisserie need
64 Night before
66 Paul of guitars

Monday's Puzzle Solved

B	I	D	E	S	■	R	E	D	S	■	A	C	H	E
I	N	U	R	E	■	E	L	A	N	■	L	A	U	D
S	C	R	E	E	■	M	A	N	A	■	A	M	M	O
T	H	E	C	R	Y	I	N	G	G	A	M	E	■	■
R	E	S	T	■	E	N	D	■	■	D	O	L	O	R
O	S	S	■	D	A	D	■	I	P	O	■	L	Y	E
■	■	■	A	U	S	■	S	C	U	R	R	I	E	D
S	U	N	S	E	T	B	O	U	L	E	V	A	R	D
T	R	E	E	L	E	S	S	■	A	R	S	■	■	■
A	S	A	■	I	D	A	■	M	S	S	■	L	A	D
B	A	R	K	S	■	■	E	E	K	■	S	I	R	E
■	■	M	A	T	C	H	S	T	I	C	K	M	E	N
E	M	I	R	■	R	O	S	A	■	H	A	I	T	I
L	I	S	A	■	A	R	A	L	■	U	T	T	E	R
F	A	S	T	■	B	A	Y	S	■	G	E	S	S	O

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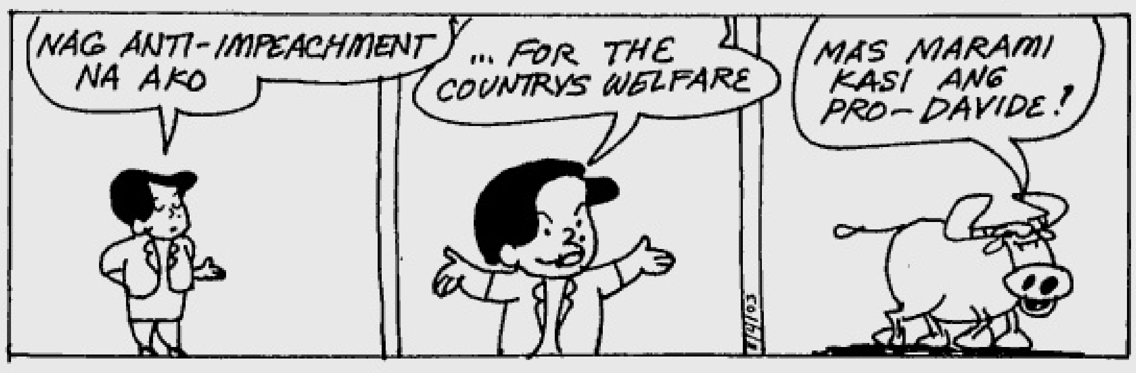
10/14/03

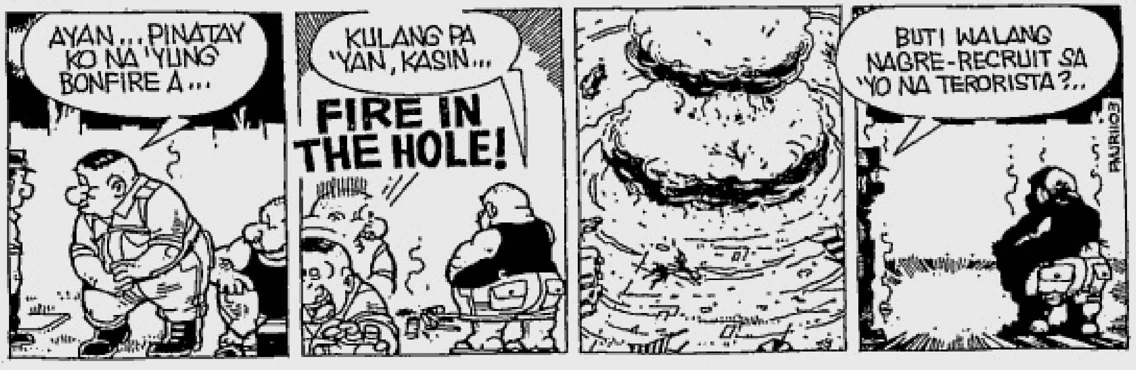
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NAG ANTI-IMPEACHMENT NA AKO
... FOR THE COUNTRYS WELFARE
11/4/03
MAS MARAMI KASI ANG PRO-DAVIDE!

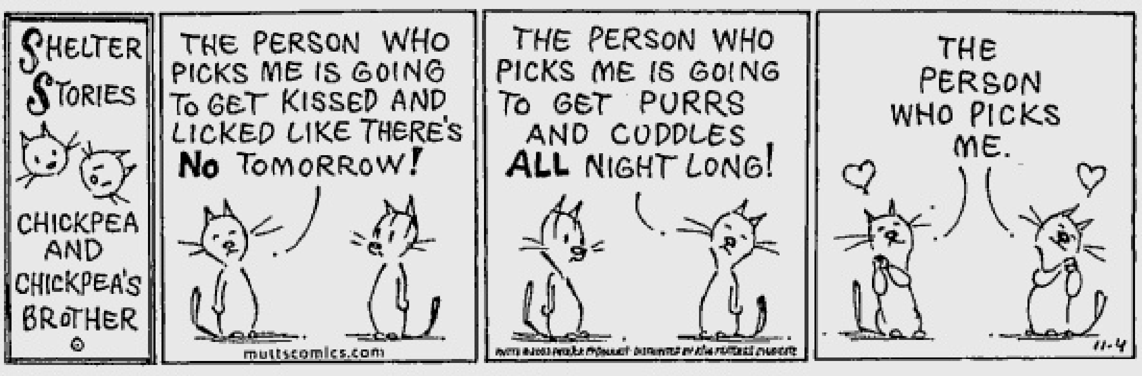
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


AYAN... PINATAY KO NA 'YUNG BONFIRE A...
KULANG PA 'YAN, KASIN...
FIRE IN THE HOLE!
BUTI WALANG NAGRE-RECRUIT SA 'YO NA TERORISTA?..
PAURI03

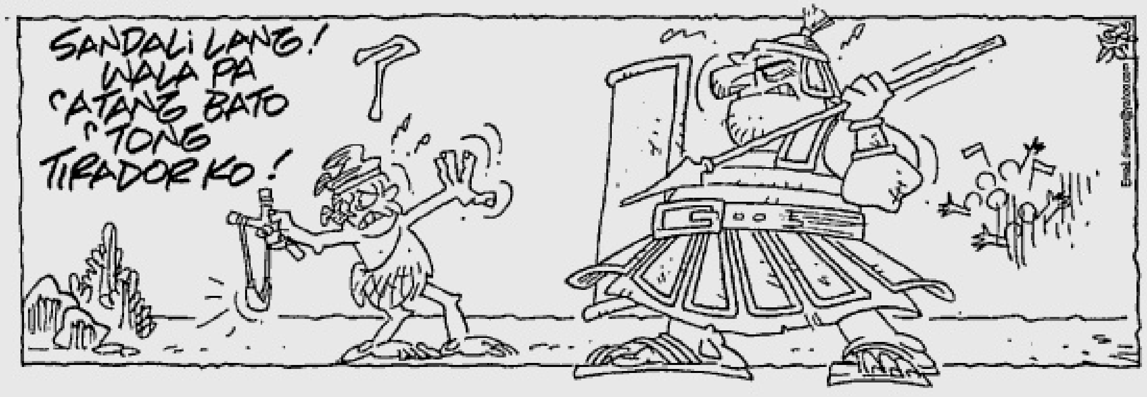
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHELTER STORIES
CHICKPEA AND CHICKPEA'S BROTHER
THE PERSON WHO PICKS ME IS GOING TO GET KISSED AND LICKED LIKE THERE'S NO TOMORROW!
muttscomics.com
THE PERSON WHO PICKS ME IS GOING TO GET PURRS AND CUDDLES ALL NIGHT LONG!
THE PERSON WHO PICKS ME.
11-4

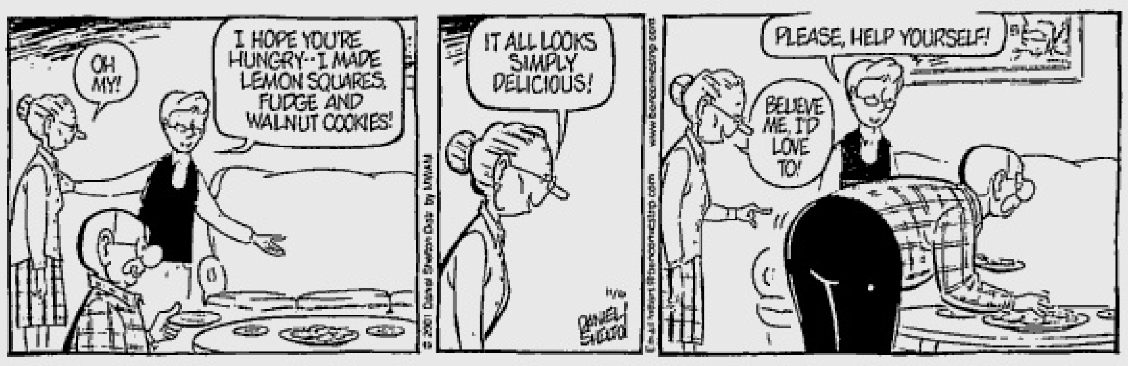
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


SANDALI LANG! WALA PA 'ATANG BATO 'TONG TIRADOR KO!

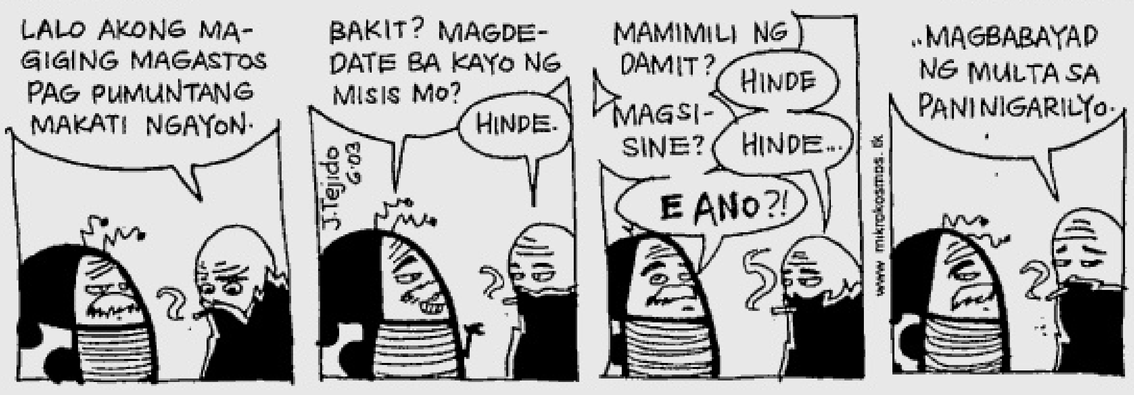
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


OH MY!
I HOPE YOU'RE HUNGRY--I MADE LEMON SQUARES, FUDGE AND WALNUT COOKIES!
IT ALL LOOKS SIMPLY DELICIOUS!
PLEASE, HELP YOURSELF!
BELIEVE ME, I'D LOVE TO!

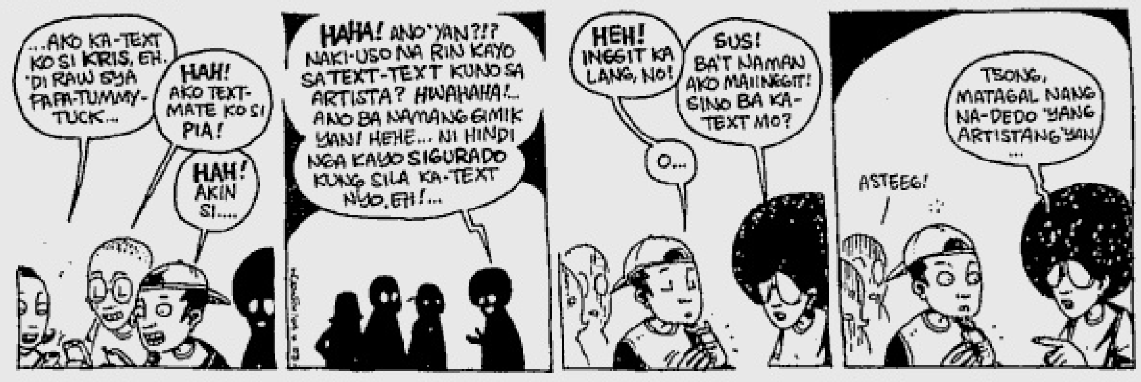
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


LALO AKONG MAGIGING MAGASTOS PAG PUMUNTANG MAKATI NGAYON.
BAKIT? MAGDE-DATE BA KAYO NG MISIS MO?
HINDE.
J.Tejido 6-03
MAMIMILI NG DAMIT?
HINDE
MAGSI-SINE?
HINDE...
E ANO?!
www.mikrokosmos.tk
..MAGBABAYAD NG MULTA SA PANINIGARILYO.

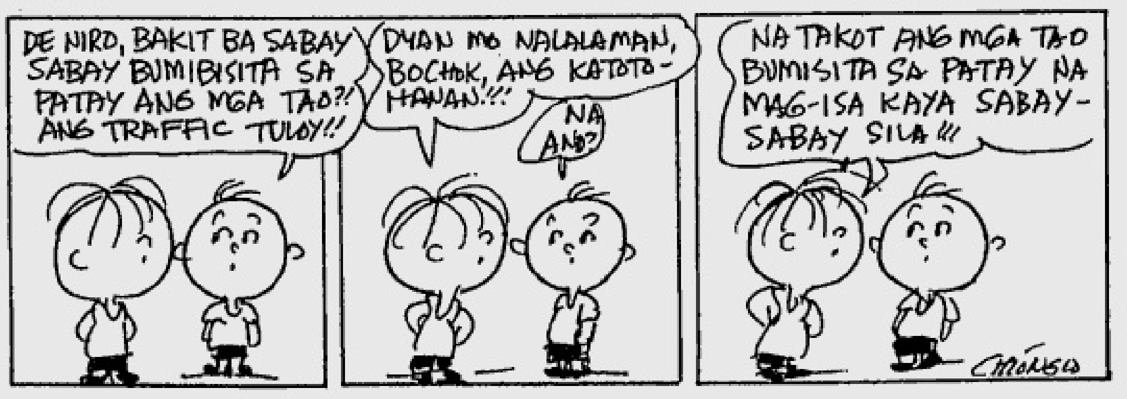
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


...AKO KA-TEXT KO SI KRIS, EH. 'DI RAW SYA PAPA-TUMMY-TUCK...
HAH! AKO TEXT-MATE KO SI PIA!
HAH! AKIN SI....
HAHA! ANO 'YAN?!? NAKI-USO NA RIN KAYO SA TEXT-TEXT KUNO SA ARTISTA? HWAHAHA!... ANO BA NAMANG GIMIK YAN! HEHE... NI HINDI NGA KAYO SIGURADO KUNG SILA KA-TEXT NYO, EH!...
HEH! INGGIT KA LANG, NO!
O...
SUS! BA'T NAMAN AKO MAIINGGIT! SINO BA KA-TEXT MO?
ASTEEG!
TSONG, MATAGAL NANG NA-DEDO 'YANG ARTISTANG 'YAN...

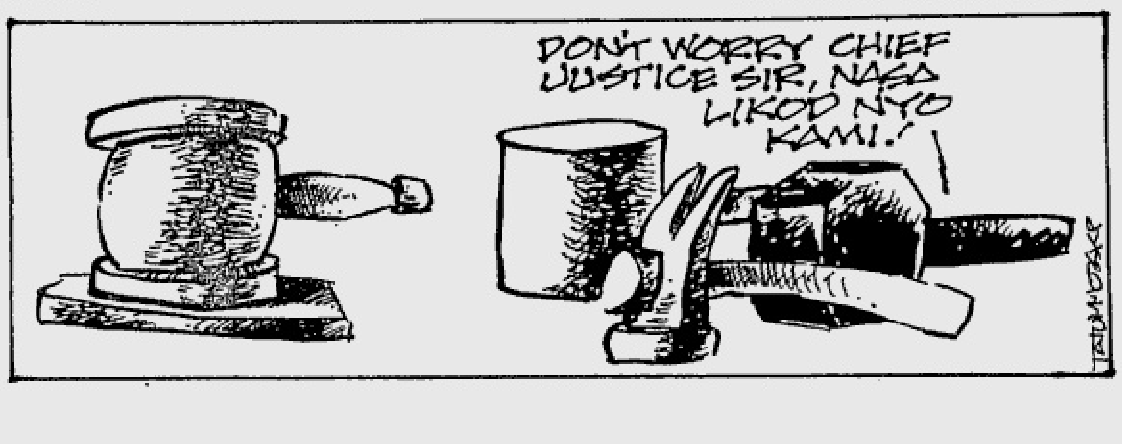
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DE NIRO, BAKIT BA SABAY SABAY BUMIBISITA SA PATAY ANG MGA TAO?! ANG TRAFFIC TULOY!!
DYAN MO NALALAMAN, BOCHOK, ANG KATOTOHANAN!!!
NA ANO?
NATAKOT ANG MGA TAO BUMISITA SA PATAY NA MAG-ISA KAYA SABAY-SABAY SILA!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


DON'T WORRY CHIEF JUSTICE SIR, NASA LIKOD NYO KAMI..!
TATUM CIZAR

DID YOU KNOW...

Singing couple **Franco Laurel** and **Ayen Munji** were seen shopping at Mark's and Spencer at Designer's Boulevard at the Alabang Town Center last Sunday afternoon. Franco and Ayen, who reside in the nearby Ayala Alabang Village, were accompanied by a uniformed bodyguard who carried their shopping bags. Husband and wife were very casual in denims and shirts.

LAW

Jude Law, actress wife divorce

LONDON—Oscar-nominated British actor Jude Law was divorced from Sadie Frost on Wednesday after she blamed him for exacerbating her post-natal depression, court papers showed.

British actress Frost said Law's behavior forced her to seek treatment three times following the birth of the couple's third child in January.

No more details were given at a brief hearing at London's High Court, which the couple did not attend. They separated after nearly six years of marriage in January.

Frost, 38, and Law, 30, made no immediate comment, although they previously said they wanted the divorce to be "as painless as possible" for their children.

"We have agreed that a divorce is the only way forward," the couple said in a statement when they announced plans to divorce in August. "We have equally agreed that we will do all in our power to make certain that this is as painless a process as possible for the benefit of the children."

Law has become one of Britain's highest paid actors after winning a best supporting actor Oscar nomination for the 1999 film "The Talented Mr. Ripley." He earned critical acclaim for roles in Sam Mendes' "Road to Perdition" and Steven Spielberg's "Artificial Intelligence: AI."

Law and Frost married in September 1997.

Newspapers said the marriage suffered after their child Iris, then aged 2, swallowed an ecstasy pill at a children's party at a London club with her mother while Law was away filming.

In July, actress Nicole Kidman won an apology and damages from the Daily Mail newspaper over a report which falsely suggested she had an affair with Law.

Frost also has a son from her previous marriage to former Spandau Ballet guitarist turned actor Gary Kemp. *Reuters*

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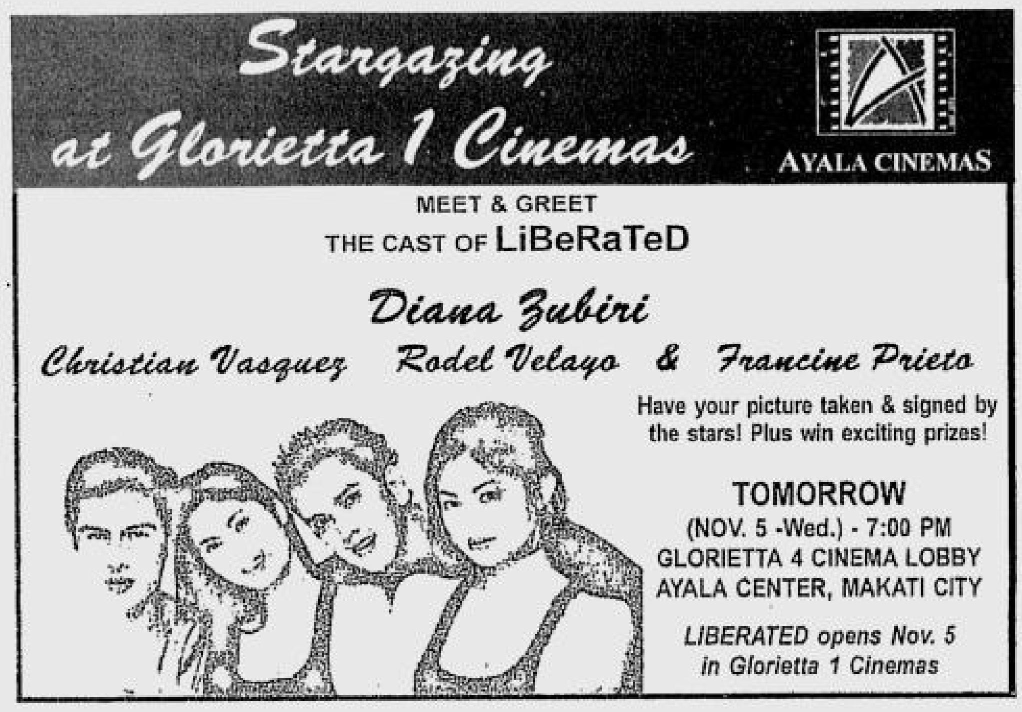
AYALA CINEMAS



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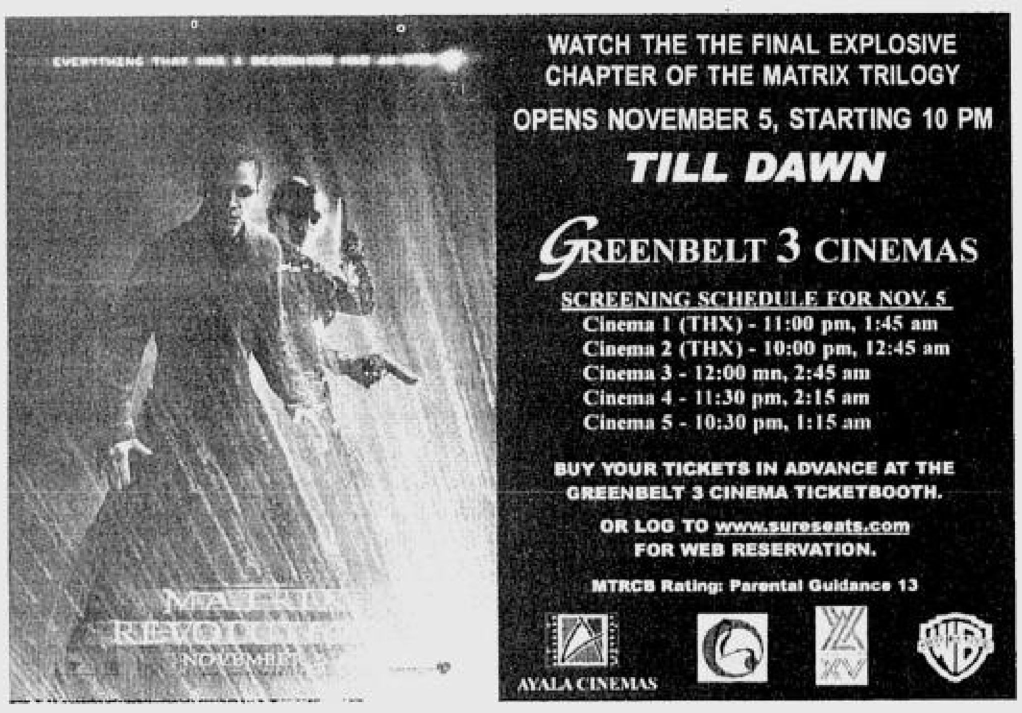
TOMORROW
(NOV. 5 -Wed.) - 7:00 PM
GLORIETTA 4 CINEMA LOBBY
AYALA CENTER, MAKATI CITY
LIBERATED opens Nov. 5 in Glorietta 1 Cinemas



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GREENBELT 3 CINEMAS
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Cinema 2 (THX) - 10:00 pm, 12:45 am
Cinema 3 - 12:00 mn, 2:45 am
Cinema 4 - 11:30 pm, 2:15 am
Cinema 5 - 10:30 pm, 1:15 am
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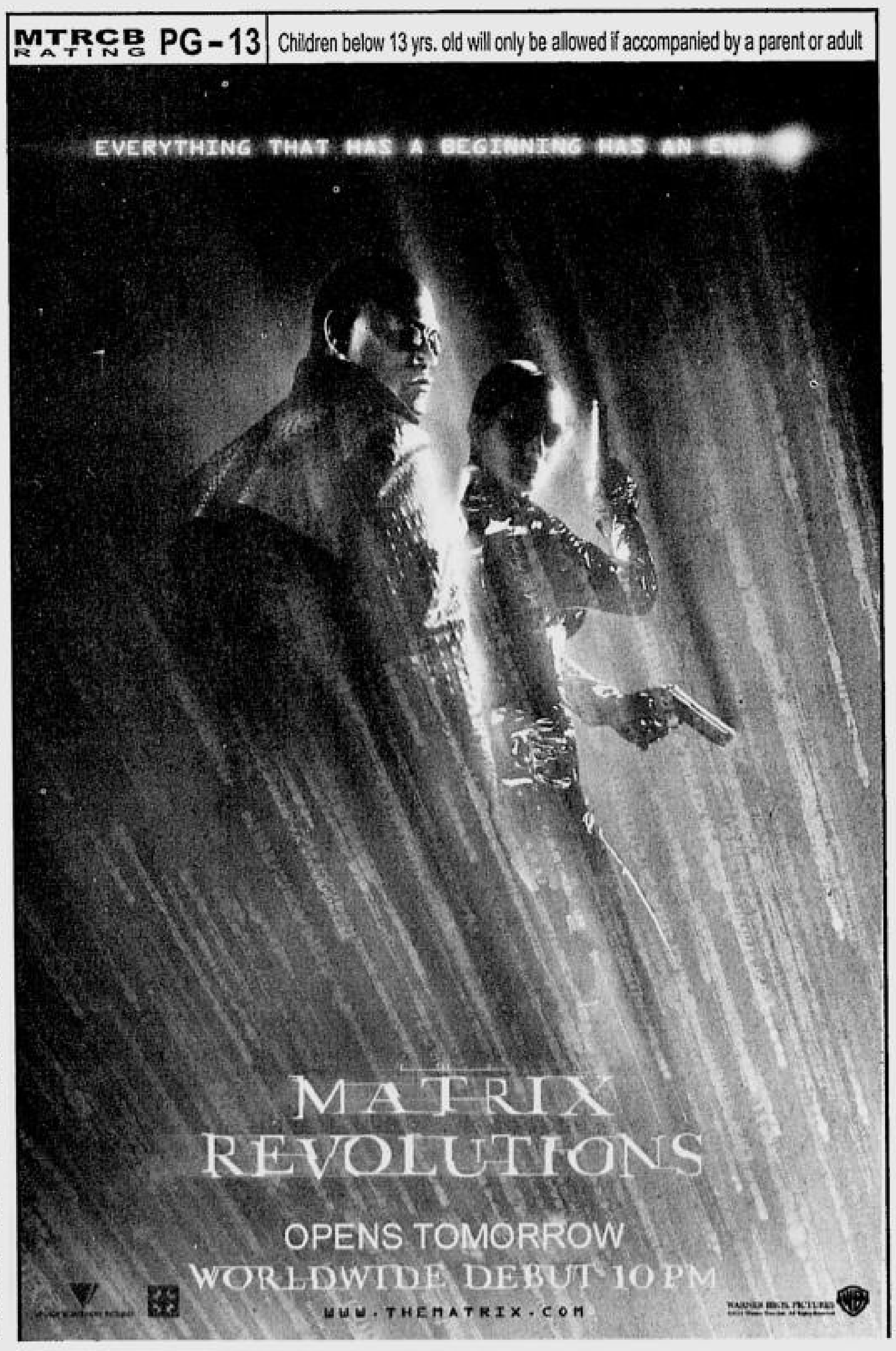
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult



ALL DIGITAL SOUND
AYALA CINEMAS
PRESENTS

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 MY FIRST ROMANCE	1 UPTOWN GIRLS	Art Film 1 UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 IDENTITY 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30	THX 1 UPTOWN GIRLS
2 UPTOWN GIRLS	2 IDENTITY	2 UPTOWN GIRLS 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7:35, 9:45	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 UPTOWN GIRLS 12:25, 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:15	2 MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 PHONE	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 THE RUNDOWN 10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30	Onstage REGINE VELASQUEZ NOV. 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29, 9PM	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 HEAD OF THE STATE 1:00, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30	3 IDENTITY
4 THE RUNDOWN	4 THE SPY		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 THE RUNDOWN 12:00, 4:15, 6:30, 8:45, 11:00	4 THE SPY
	5 MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 MY FIRST ROMANCE 1:20, 3:40, 6:00, 8:20, 10:40	5 THE RUNDOWN
	6 MY FIRST ROMANCE			
	7 HEAD OF THE STATE			

For sreening times, call 729-7777. Movies are subject to change without prior notice.
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Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

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2 (SDDS) THE RUNDOWN
3 (DTS) MY FIRST ROMANCE
4 GOLD(DTS) AMERICAN PIE THE WEDDING
5 GOLD(DOLBY EX) MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER
6 GOLD(SDDS) IDENTITY
7 GOLD(DOLBY EX) UPTOWN GIRLS
8 MY FIRST ROMANCE
9 THE PHONE
10 FREAKY FRIDAY

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486
1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE
3 (DTS) RESERVE
4 RESERVE
5 RESERVE
6 (DTS) RESERVE
Golden Pearl THX RESERVE

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1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 THE RUNDOWN
3 MAPUPULANG LABI

starmall Movies
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(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986
1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 BELPHEGOR
3 MAPUPULANG LABI
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) THE RUNDOWN
5 BUGBOG SARADO

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285
1 THE SPY
2 MAPUPULANG LABI
3 THE RUNDOWN
4 MY FIRST ROMANCE
5 UTANG NG AMA
6 IDENTITY

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004
1 BELPHEGOR
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) TEL. 893-4225, 892-2503
CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 MEDALLION
2 FREAKY FRIDAY

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
tel 930.9515
1
2
3

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) TEL. 776-74-21
1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 KERIDA
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA
Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588
1 (SDDS) RESERVE
4 RESERVE
5 MAPUPULANG LABI
6 MY FIRST ROMANCE
7 (DTS) IDENTITY
8 (SDDS) THE RUNDOWN
9 (DOLBY) THE SPY

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508
2 RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364-3781
1 MAPUPULANG LABI
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 MY FIRST ROMANCE
4 (SDDS) THE RUNDOWN
5 UTANG NG AMA
6 (DOLBY) IDENTITY
7 (DTS) BELPHEGOR
8 BUGBOG SARADO
9 KISKISAN

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082
1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 (SDDS) BELPHEGOR
3 (DTS) THE RUNDOWN
4 (DOLBY) UTANG NG AMA
5 MAPUPULANG LABI

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 UTANG NG AMA
3 (DTS) VISIBLE SECRET-2
4 MAPUPULANG LABI
5 (SDDS) THE RUNDOWN

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1 RESERVE

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 RESERVE

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson TELE OF EROTICK
Lords MAPUPULANG LABI
Jennet RESERVE

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 IDENTITY
3 MAPUPULANG LABI
4

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238
1 (DOLBY) THE SPY
2 THE RUNDOWN
3 RESERVE
4 MY FIRST ROMANCE
5 MAPUPULANG LABI

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)
1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 MAPUPULANG LABI
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta
MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400
1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 UTANG NG AMA
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL) THE SPY
4 (SDDS) THE RUNDOWN
5 (DTS) IDENTITY
6 MAPUPULANG LABI
7 MY FIRST ROMANCE

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
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1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
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1 KATAS
2 FIRST ROMANCE
3 (DTS) THE RUNDOWN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 BELPHEGOR
2 (DTS) MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 (DOLBY) THE RUNDOWN
4 AMERICAN PSYCHO

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 (DOLBY) THE RUNDOWN
3 (DTS) AMERICAN PSYCHO
4 BELPHEGOR

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 MEDALLION
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 (DOLBY) AMERICAN PIE THE WEDDING
4

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729
1 BUGBOG SARADO
2 BELPHEGOR
3 (DOLBY) THE RUNDOWN
4 (DTS) MY FIRST ROMANCE

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305
1 (DOLBY) MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 (DTS) THE RUNDOWN
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 KIKAY
3 (DTS) UTANG NG AMA
4 MAPUPULANG LABI

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) THE RUNDOWN
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 (DTS) BELPHEGOR
4 UTANG NG AMA
5 AMERICAN PSYCHO

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 BUGBOG SARADO
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558
1 THE RUNDOWN
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 INNER SENSES

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 MATCHSTICK MEN
2 UTANG NG AMA
3 (DTS) THE RUNDOWN
4 (DOLBY) MY FIRST ROMANCE

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808
1 (DTS) RESERVE
2 (DTS) RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 BUGBOG SARADO
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 RESERVE

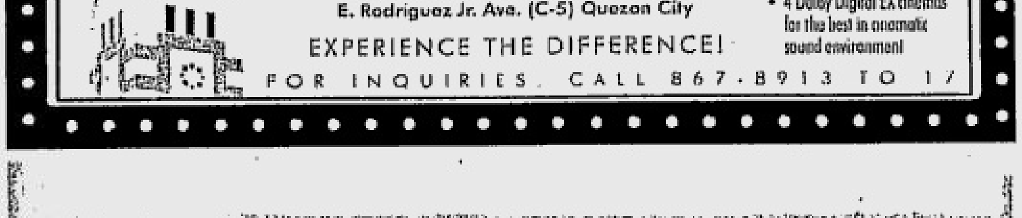
Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 THE RUNDOWN
3 MY FIRST ROMANCE
4 HOUSE OF 1,000 CORPSES

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045)887-5001 TO 03
1 (DOLBY EX) THE RUNDOWN
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 (DTS) UTANG NG AMA
4 BUGBOG SARADO

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887-0121
1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 UTANG NG AMA
3 (DOLBY) THE RUNDOWN
4 (DTS) MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS



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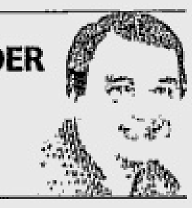
Groundbreaking switch



VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ALL the way from Latin America, many telenovelas in the Spanish language have been exported to the Philippines, where they have been dubbed in Filipino and shown to great popular effect. Now, for a change, all the way from Argentina, telenovela star **Segundo Cernadas** has been imported by the Philippine TV channel, GMA 7, to tape a new TV soap, "Te Amo." That's a groundbreaking switch, you'll agree.

And, most likely, it won't stop there. If the new telenovela is well-made, it could then be exported in turn to Spanish-speaking territories, where it could earn precious additional income for its Filipino producer.

There, the showing of "Te Amo" bears watching, because it could usher in more foreign sales for local TV products. Some of them have been sold abroad, principally by ABS-CBN, but the income hasn't been all that substantial—yet.

Perhaps, the added appeal of an Argentinian leading man will be the key selling point that can open up the Spanish-speaking TV market abroad to locally produced TV shows.

If this catches on, Filipino TV networks could do the same with local soaps starring a popular Taiwanese or Korean lead for the Asian market, and an American, Brit or Aussie for English-speaking territories.

That final prospect would surely be welcomed by local show biz's many *balikbayan* talents who can still act only in English, even after months or years in the Philippines.

At least, they will no longer be limited to cameo appearances, or supporting roles that require them to speak in the awkward mix of Tagalog and English ("I told you I can't marry you, *di ba?* Don't be *makulit naman,* please?") that's become a new form of comedy writing in these parts.

Truth to tell, if other countries can export so many of their TV productions to the Philippines, there's no reason why local networks can't reverse the traffic in a similarly big way, with or without the ratings appeal of some foreign stars.

After all, local TV shows are made up not just of local color but of substantial borrowings, adaptations or outright imitations of foreign entertainment material.

The major inhibiting factors aren't related to technical or production elements, but to attitude and work ethic. In other countries, for instance, they take a whole week to rehearse and tape a 30-minute sitcom episode. Here, a 90-minute episode is rehearsed and taped in only one or two days!

Unfortunately, a lot gets lost or done badly in the mad rush to beat the clock in order to keep costs down. That's why, when local TV products are offered to TV channels abroad, some of them are rejected as unfit for showing in those territories.

So, to enjoy better foreign sales, local TV people will just have to value their work more, and to devote more time, money and talent to it.

They should be encouraged in this regard, because the resulting improvements would also benefit local viewers, who would finally get the professionally produced, quality products that our networks should have been giving them in the first place.

'El Filibusterismo'

GANTIMPALA Theater Foundation presents **Jomar Fleras'** dramatization of Rizal's "El Filibusterismo" at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Nov. 7, 8 and 9 at St. Cecilia's Hall, St. Scholastica's College, Vito Cruz, Manila. Leads include **Allan Paule, Wowie de Guzman, Roeder** and **China Cojuangco.** Call 899-5745.

New action series

EVERY Tuesday at 9 p.m., Studio 23 telecasts the new action series, "Fastlane," directed by "Charlie's Angel" megman McG and topbilling **Peter Facinellio.** He plays an LAPD cop who, after his black partner is gunned down, teams up with his partner's brother to go undercover and hunt down the killers.

Helping them create new identities is savvy Billie (**Tiffany Thiesen**), who gives them access to a warehouse filled with dazzling valuables impounded by the police. Armed with cash, guns, jewelry and sports cars, the undercover agents are now ready to fake their way into LA's flashiest criminal circles.

Horror anthology

AT 9 P.M. on Nov. 15, the Star Mandarin channel screens "Three," an award-winning horror anthology film megged by directors from Hong Kong, Thailand and Korea:

Peter Chan's "Going Home" is about a child's discovery of a dead body. **Nimibutr Nonzee's** "The Wheel" focuses on the voodoo power of a cursed puppet. And **Kim Jee-Woon's** "Memories" tells the surreal story of a woman who loses her memory in a weird town.

ABS-CBN 'aggressively' . . .

From page A28

tertainment that "Bernadette Sembrano has an existing contract with us."

Angeli admitted there was an option for Bernadette to renew her contract with GMA 7 for another year.

"We're still studying our options and we're praying about it," Angeli said. "We also talked to Che-Che Lazaro, who is Bernadette's mentor and my good friend."

If Bernadette moves to ABS-CBN, she will supposedly join the network's daily morning program, "Magandang Umaga Bayan," now hosted by Edu Manzano, Tintin Bersola, Erwin Tulfo and Ogie Diaz.

GMA 7 had suspended Bernadette after she walked out at the end of the late-evening newscast "Saksi," after her "Saksi" co-anchor, Arnold Clavio, read a statement that said GMA 7 was not airing "The Probe Team" episode that Bernadette had researched and would have presented, on the lifestyle check of Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) chair Ephraim Genuino.

This triggered talks that Bernadette, who is also a staff member of "Probe," wanted to leave the network.

GMA 7 had initially banned the airing of the episode after "The Probe Team" failed to present complete documents to support its reports on Genuino, according to a statement the network issued regarding the issue.

In an earlier interview with INQUIRER Entertainment, Bernadette said she had sent a letter to Marissa Flores, GMA 7 vice president for news and public affairs, apologizing for her behavior in the "Saksi" telecast.

"What I did was totally uncalled for," Bernadette said. "It happened because I became too deeply involved in my story. I'm hoping that everything will be ironed out soon."

In the "Probe" episode, Genuino was reported to be the owner of shares in several corporations, which he did not declare in his statement of assets and liabilities for February 2001, December 2001 and December 2002.

GMA 7 said in a statement after it banned the episode that Probe Productions did not clearly state that Genuino owned the shares when the chair filed his statement of assets and liabilities for 2001 and 2002.

The network said it allowed the airing of the Genuino episode only after producers of "Probe" agreed to clarify that the documents they obtained from the Securities and Exchange Commission indicating Genuino's stake in several corporations had been filed before Feb. 5, 2001.

Bernadette tried to get Genuino's side for the episode, but the Pagcor chair refused to be interviewed, according to Lazaro.

Mandy Moore to do Araneta

MOORE. Crossover diva

POP superstar Mandy Moore will also be performing at the Araneta Coliseum on Thursday, Nov. 20.

The 19-year-old singer and actress is expected to sing her hits such as "I Wanna Be With You," "Cry," "Only Hope," "Crush;" "Someday We'll Know," and "Candy."

Her special guests include fast-rising pop/R&B singers Jay-R and Arnee.

Propelled by her debut single "Candy," Mandy's first album, "So Real," went platinum and launched her into worldwide stardom. Soon, she was touring with such popular acts as the Backstreet Boys and 'N'Sync. Her next album, "I Wanna Be With You," also went platinum, fueled by the title track.

Mandy also dabbled in acting, starting with bit roles in such Disney films as "Dr. Doolittle 2" and "The Princess Diaries." It wasn't until she was offered the lead role in the film adaptation of Nicholas Sparks' best-selling novel, "A Walk to Remember," that movie audiences began to take notice of her as a movie star. The film's success made her virtually the only new pop star to have successfully crossed over into movie stardom.

Mandy was also in the more recent "How to Deal" and "Flirting With Disaster."

In her third album, "Coverage," Mandy started to slowly shed her bubble gum pop image. The album includes 12 classic pop/rock pieces from the '70s and '80s, including Todd Rundgren's "Can We Still be Friends?" and Carly Simon's "Anticipation."

Produced by ALV Events International, "Mandy Moore Manila Tour '03" is presented by Smart Buddy Load, Smart Music Link and Petron XCS. Major sponsors are Penshoppe, Purefoods and Tommy Hilfiger Watches. Media partners include The Philippine Star, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Jam 88.3, Wave 89.1, 89.9 DWTM, 94.7 Mellow Touch, 99.5 RT and 103.5 K-Lite.

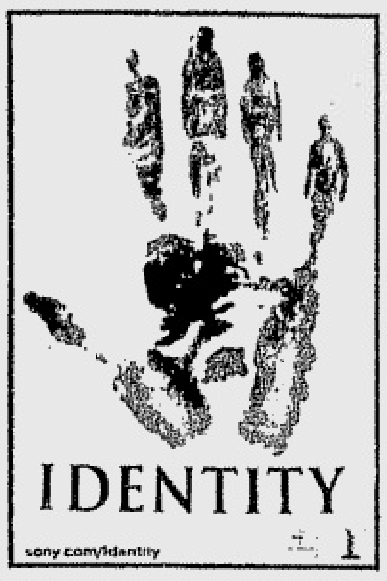
Tickets are available at the Araneta Coliseum and all TicketNet outlets (913-8684). Showtime is 8 p.m.

SEX BOMB VS STREETBOYS
The Sex Bomb Girls (near left) collide with the Streetboys in a show billed as "The Spaghetti Party Showdown," on Wednesday, Nov. 5, at Klownz Araneta in Cubao, Quezon City. The showdown will try to decide which dance group is the best. The sexy kittens, including Rochelle and Jopay, star in their own daytime soap, "Daisy Siyete," and are a mainstay on "Eat Bulaga!" The "wolves" include movie stars Vhong Navarro and Danilo Barrios. Buy your ticket now and support your favorite dance group. Each ticket costs only P400. For inquiries, call 995-0874 or text (0917)810-9394.

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	BUGBOG SARADO
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	MY FIRST ROMANCE
B	MAPUPULANG LABI
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
CINEMA-2	MAPUPULANG LABI
CINEMA-3	UTANG NG AMA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BELPHEGOR
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER
CINEMA-6	AMERICAN PIE THE WEDDING
CINEMA-7	BUGBOG SARADO
CINEMA-8	MY FIRST ROMANCE
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	RUNDOWN
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	IDENTITY
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	UPTOWN GIRLS
CINEMA-12	SPY
CINEMA-14	MY FIRST ROMANCE
CINEMA-15	MY FIRST ROMANCE
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PINAS)	RUNDOWN
CINEMA-1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
CINEMA-2	INNER SENSES
CINEMA-4	MATCHSTICK MEN
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

MTRCB RATING ▶ R — 18 | Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.



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What if every choice we make was already decided for us? What if there really were no coincidences in life and our destinies were already predetermined?

From the producer of the SCREAM movies, comes IDENTITY, a smart, mind- bending thriller with a disturbing twist.

Ten strangers with secrets are brought together in a motel on a rainstorm. A limo driver (John Cusack), an '80s TV star (Rebecca DeMornay), a cop (Ray Liotta) who is transporting a killer (Jake Busey), a call girl (Amanda Peet), a pair of newlyweds and a family in crisis, all take shelter at a desolate motel run by a nervous night manager.

Relief in finding shelter is quickly replaced with spine-chilling fear as the 10 travelers die, one by one. They soon realize that, if they are to survive, they'll have to uncover the secret that has brought them all together.

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Ali 2	MAPUPULANG LABI
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Ali 4	RUNDOWN
Ali 5	IDENTITY
Ali 6	UPTOWN GIRL
Ali 7	MY FIRST TOMANCE
ARANETA COLISEUM	
NOV 9	PBA GAMES
NOV 10	NCA NATIONAL 8-STAG DERBY
NOV 12	NCA NATIONAL 8-STAG DERBY
NOV 14	NCA NATIONAL 8-STAG DERBY
NOV 16	PBA GAMES

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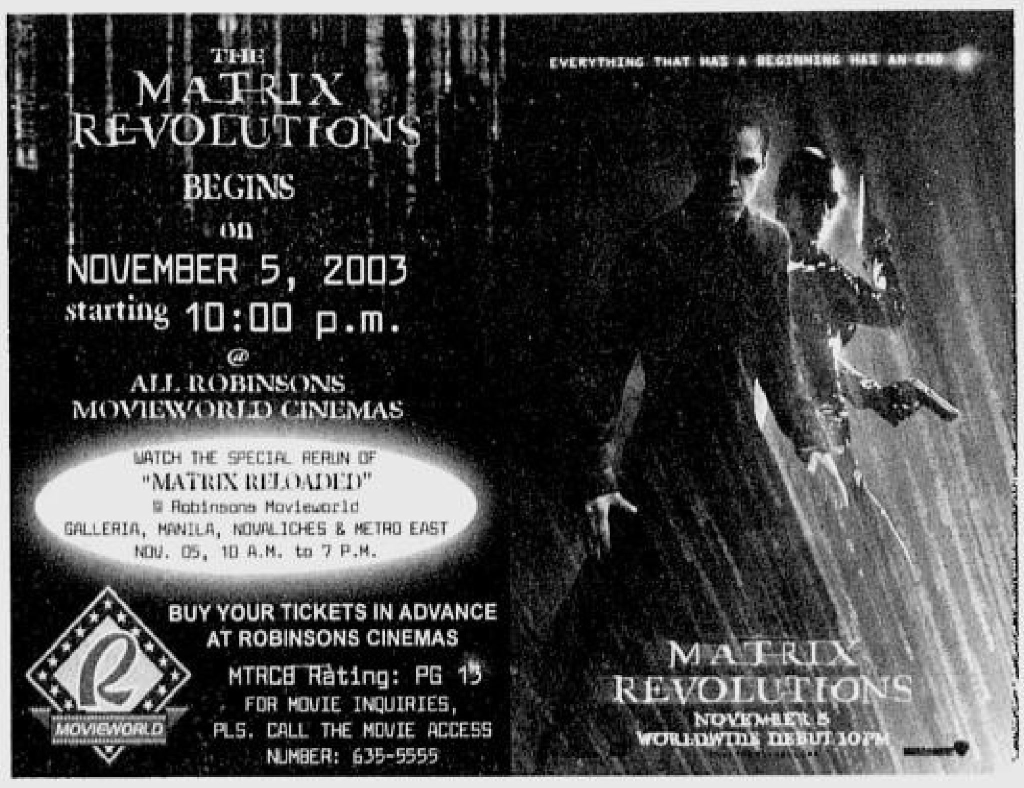

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Great Things Start From Small Beginnings

"Great things start from small beginnings, growing up reach early for your dreams..." To reach the Olympics is the ultimate goal of every athlete. To get there is no easy task. One has to dream big, start somewhere and be armed with the right skills, values, and ideals that would entail him a spot in the pinnacle of all sporting events.

One has got to have that Olympism element to turn dreams into reality. What then, is Olympism? Olympism is described as a philosophy of life, a way of living that exalts and combines into a well-balanced whole the qualities of body, mind, and spirit.

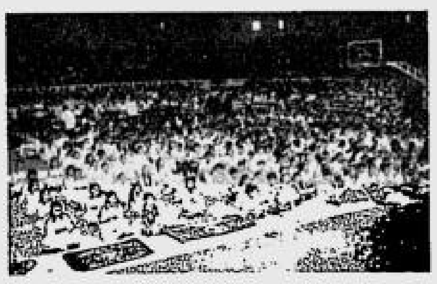
It celebrates life and everything that it has to offer and seeks to create a balance of ideals and values, sports, culture and education. Olympism is found in the MILO spirit, which MILO has been sharing to its public for more than three decades now.

It shares every child's dreams and takes delight in being part of a family's pride as they see those dreams come true, especially with its long-running sports program such as the MILO Summer Sports Clinics, MILO BEST Center, MILO Marathon, and the MILO Little Olympics.

The Summer Sports Clinics, which started in 1982, evolved to be one of the most-anticipated activities for the summer, while the MILO Best Center, now on its 24th year enjoys the distinction of having given birth to some of the basketball icons now playing in the amateur and professional league and it continues to be the breeding ground of future basketball stars.

The MILO Marathon since it started in 1979, continues to enjoy intense patronage with an increasing number of participants in each leg being ran.

The MILO Little Olympics similarly, enjoys warm acceptance among the youth and has been one of the yearly events eagerly anticipated in the school calendar.



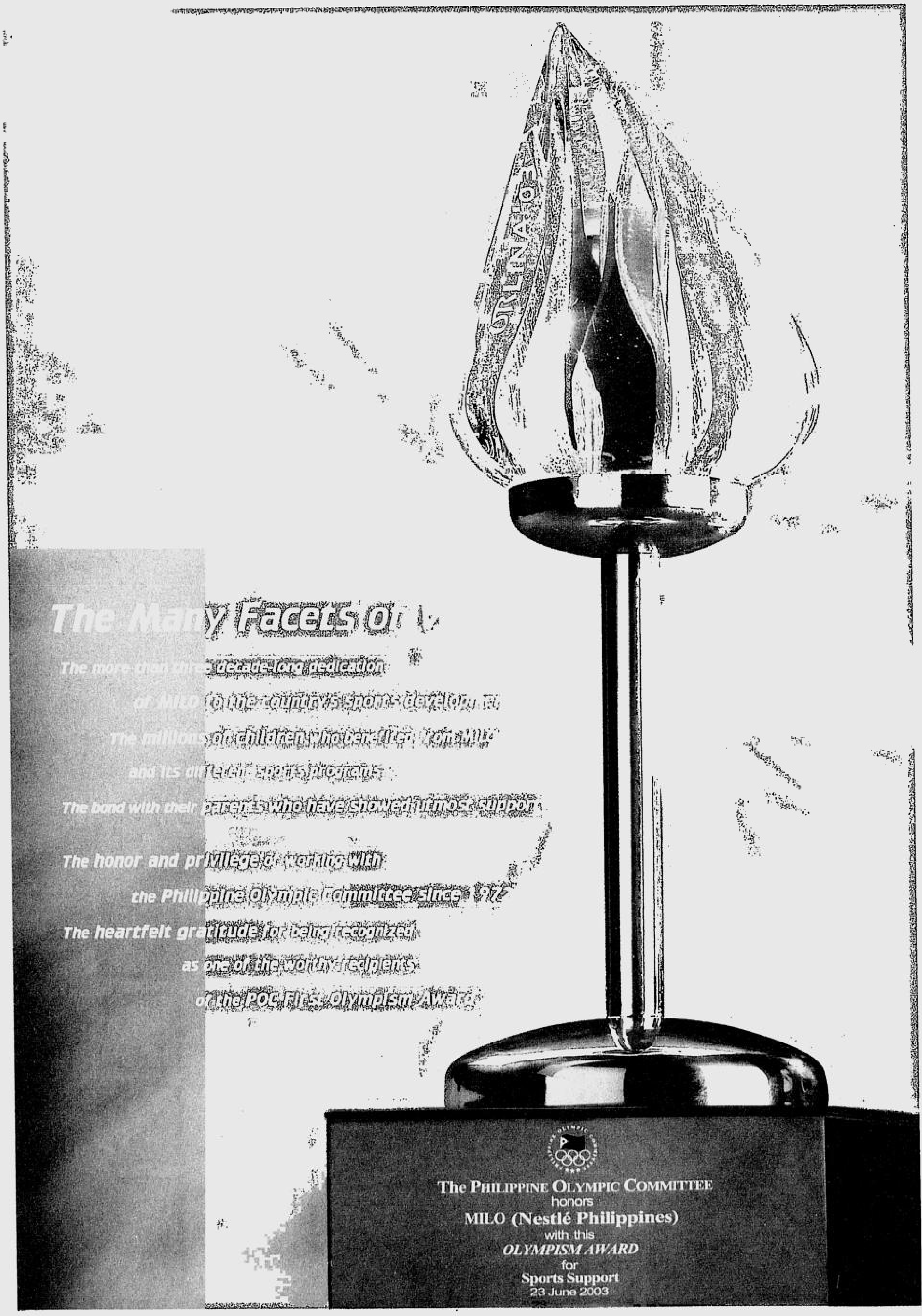
In each of these programs, MILO has given and continues to give a piece of itself and celebrates with the kids and their families the spirit of Olympism as well.

It has not only helped produce some of the country's bests, but has also made itself a partner in seeking out fresh talents that will shape and define the future of Philippine sports, and a nation of competitive, but well-grounded individuals.

With this, MILO has evolved from being a regular breakfast partner to become an all-around energy drink that could be taken any time, anywhere along with the philosophy it embraces beyond the dining table.

Because of these endeavors to promote sports development and positive values, the special commission tasked by the Philippine Olympic Committee, which included Olympian Rafael Hechanova, secretary Mar Roxas, former Mayor Gemiliano Lopez, Yolly Ong, former PBA Commissioner Emilio 'Jun' Bernardino, and Carlos 'Bobong' Velez were one in including MILO to the pioneering batch of Olympism awardees. At its simplest, Olympism is synonymous with positive ideals and discipline essential in every child's well-being.

MILO was cited along with the equally illustrious Dr. Jose C. Canlas (Sports Science and Medicine), Philippine Indigenous Games and Sports Savers Inc. (Sports and Culture), Messrs. Ramon Vecina and Alberto Garcia for sports photography, Ricardo 'Dick' Ildefonso (sports broadcasting television); Guillermo 'Willie' Hernandez (sports broadcasting radio), Gameplan (sports broadcasting television), Joaquin M. Henson (sports journalism), Julio Vargas, and Antonio de las Alas (sports leadership) Best Center Sports Inc.


The Many Facets of
The more than three decade-long dedication
of MILO to the country's sports development
The millions of children who benefited from MILO
and its different sports programs
The bond with their parents who have showed utmost support
The honor and privilege of working with
the Philippine Olympic Committee since 197
The heartfelt gratitude for being recognized
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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

SEMBRANO eyed to replace Willie Revillame on "Willingly Yours" JM GUAO FUNZALAN

ABS-CBN 'aggressively' trying to pirate GMA 7 show host

By Marinel R. Cruz

GMA 7 talent Bernadette Sembrano is being "aggressively" wooed by ABS-CBN after she was rumored to be resigning from her network.

Angeli Pangilinan-Valenciano, Bernadette's manager, said they had met with ABS-CBN executives early this week.

ABS-CBN is supposedly eyeing Bernadette as replacement for Willie Revillame in the Saturday afternoon public service program "Willingly Yours," which aired its final telecast last Saturday.

Bernadette has her own program, "Wish Ko Lang," with the same public-service format on GMA 7.

But Angeli denied Bernadette would be replacing Willie. She said Willie had called her up last week, but she refused to disclose what they talked about.

Angeli said GMA 7 was willing to let Bernadette go, "but as of now, Bernadette is still committed to 'Wish Ko Lang.'"

GMA 7 officer in charge for corporate communications Butch Raquel told INQUIRER En

ABS-CBN/ A26

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6. Ipasok ang iyong 6-10 DIGIT PIN, press OK.

7. Hintayin ang confirmation message. Kung correct, press YES.

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CalPERS seen keeping RP as investment site

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE CALIFORNIA Employees' Retirement System, the biggest pension fund in the United States, is likely to keep the Philippines on its list of permissible investment sites next year, according to Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

"We were able to clarify outstanding issues and I am hopeful that we will be kept in the list. We are working closely with CalPERS and its adviser Wilshire Consulting. We will also get in touch with third party sources of Wilshire," Camacho told reporters.

Camacho led a Philippine team that met' with CalPERS and Wilshire last week so the country would fare better in the upcoming review of the pension fund's permissible investment site next year.

The government is hoping CalPERS will reconsider the poor marks it gave the Philippines last February for its performance a year ago.

While the influential US pension fund has only about $30 million in local stocks, its investment decision is being followed by other investors.

CalPERS' manages around $133 billion in assets, of which about $1.8 billion worth are in emerging markets.

This year was the second in a row that CalPERS threatened to pull out of the Philippines but was eventually talked into reconsidering its stance.

"More than its investments, we value the influence that CalPERS has on other investors. Because of its size, it has a big impact on other investors," said the finance chief.

Camacho said Wilshire Consulting had agreed to coordinate with Philippine officials particularly on the issues involving market practices and other conduct of business, including those related to labor, judiciary and civil liberties where the country was given low ratings.

Wilshire also advised the Philippine team to closely work with third-party sources of data used in the evaluation such as Transparency International, Verite and Oxford.

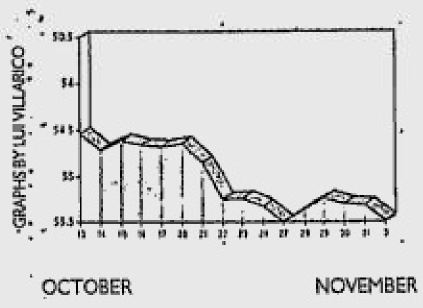
The Philippines was removed from CalPERS' list in February after Wilshire downgraded the country's judicial system's rating from 2 to 1 (the highest score is 2). It gave the country the lowest grade of 1 for political stability, market liquidity and volatility, market regulation and investor protection and capital market openness.

But in April, CalPERS gave the Philippines a one-year "cure period" within which it should im-

CALPERS/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 55.48 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Nov. 3, 2003

¥ 108.98 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Oct. 31, 2003

GOLD: $382.20-382.70
per ounce Hong Kong, Nov. 3, 2003

Weak Asian currencies, coup rumors drag peso down to 55.48 to $1

By Clarissa S. Batino

REGIONAL weakness and a fresh round of coup rumors fanned more anxiety in the money market pulling down the peso to 55.48 to $1 yesterday, from 55.315 last Friday.

Yesterday's close was two centavos off the low of 55.50 to $1 on Oct. 27.

Traders primarily pointed to weak regional currencies, particularly the Japanese yen, which emerged as the region's poorest performer yesterday as it shed 1.3 percent.

The peso was the third worst performer yesterday after giving up 0.3 percent. On a year-to-date basis, however, the peso remained the weakest in the region registering a cumulative depreciation of 3.4 percent.

"We have a case of a strong dollar. But we could not discount lingering uncertainties including rumors of another military uprising," said a treasury official from a foreign bank.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said it had stayed away from the market as indicated by the low turnover of $125 million.

Government officials, however, are confident that the peso would gain steam once political anxieties were resolved.

But the market, according to traders, remains worried over rumors of a "coup happening in November." They pointed to a statement made by Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. that the impeachment could be used as a takeoff for a military-backed uprising.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho dismissed such coup talks as mere rumors although he admitted that unscrupulous groups might use the impeachment issue "to create instability."

Stocks hit 18-mo high

By Doris C. Dumlao

LOCAL stocks were up 0.89 percent yesterday hitting a new 18-month high of 1,411.59 as investors shrugged off domestic political concerns in favor of the improving global economic outlook and optimistic corporate earnings results.

Yesterday's close was the highest since April 11,2002 when the market ended at 1,414.78.

Telecommunication stocks Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Globe Telecom as well as mall giant SM Prime Holdings Inc. led the gainers.

For the fifth straight session, the main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index moved up by 12.52 points from Friday's close on the back of buying of select blue chips.

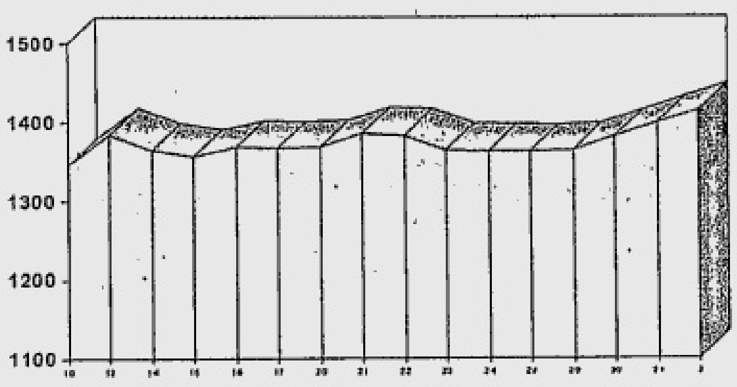
Value turnover reached P821 million inclusive of P246 million in cross sales.

The local market benefited from the overnight gains in the US market, which in turn, were brought about by improving economic indicators.

"Local investors are getting some guidance from overseas markets," said Eric Claudio, head of research at Unicapital Securities.

Although domestic conditions, in general, were not upbeat, the market got a big boost from better global economic outlook and expectations of good corporate earnings, he said.

In the case of SM Prime, for instance, Claudio said investors were bullish because retailers were benefiting from strong domestic demand, as indicated by the good performance of other retail companies like Jollibee Foods Corp.



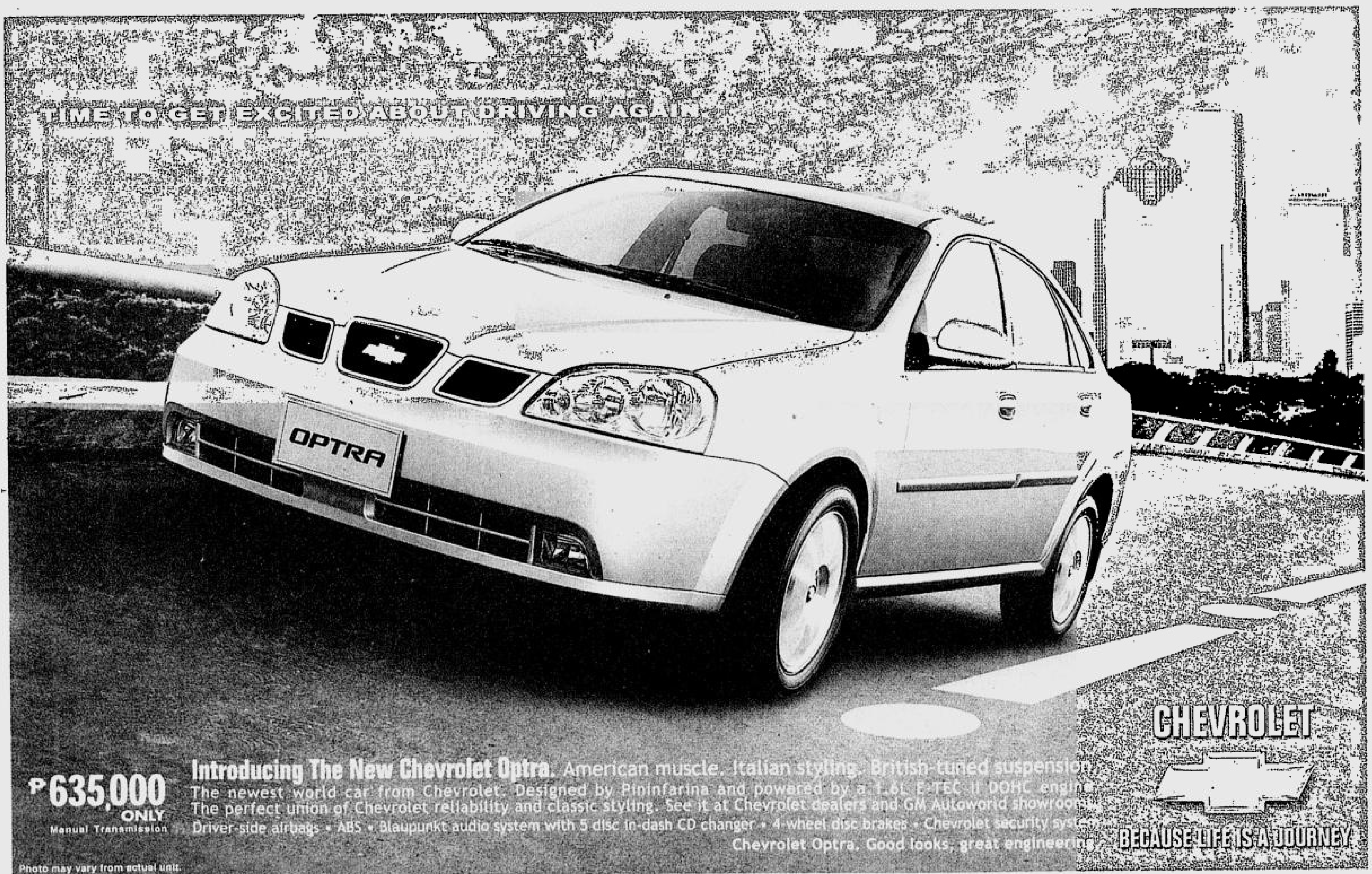
PLDT, which will announce its results today, was the most heavily traded stock yesterday, gaining by P15 to close at P780.

"The telecom craze in the market is spreading to the second tier telecom issues. Among the top gainers yesterday were Pilipino Telephone Corp. and Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.," said AB Capital Securities analyst Jose Vistan.

"This could be the so-called bandwagon effect, that is, investors tend to buy everything from the same industry. Sometimes, investors don't understand much about it, but they're buying anyway," he said.

Analysts said the market was expecting consumer demand to further strengthen in the coming

STOCKS/ B2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MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

I JUST read Monica's book, "How I blew it in Washington." She gives a blow by blow account of her relationship with Bill. "Bill was undeniably a handsome, charismatic man. He had a mania for interns and they would queue up outside his office everyday. Sometimes, he had them alphabetically, but usually he took them in turns. The first time I met him I was overwhelmed. We kissed and cuddled and had a few drinks. Then, he made his indecent proposal and I was shocked. However, he was so persuasive that he led me to believe it was a Breathalyzer test. Such a thing had never entered my head before. He boasted that he had been down on everything except the Titanic."

The Lion King, Mufasa, died in his prime at the hands of his brother Scar, but his son, Simba lived to a great age due to the fact he took simbastatin. There are many statins made all over the world but the cost is so prohibitive that the FDA has ordered that all companies should transfer their production facilities to Statin Island. I hope I am not overstatin the obvious but few Americans know how it got its name. Around the end of the 15th century, Columbus sailed down the Hudson River in thick fog. He spied a small piece of land and yelled, "Is t'at an island?"

Two sperm were racing to get to an unfertilized egg. The first said, "Do you think it's far to the Fallopian tubes?" "I don't think so," said the second, "we already passed the tonsils."

Computer users beware. There is a new virus named the Monica virus. It only attacks laptops.

Did you hear about the dyslexic who sold his soul to Santa?

On the sixth day, God made the earth and gave it 12 hours of darkness and 12 hours of light. "What will you do now," asked St. Peter. "I think I'll call it a day."

Why does Erap have to go to America to have a kneecap replaced? Can't they give him Kneeozep? For his back, he could have Bactrim, for his ear, Earethromycin, for his eye, Eyeodine, and for his penis, Penisillin They are all available here in the Philippines.

A jogger came across a brand new tennis ball. He stuffed it in the pocket of his running shorts. When he stopped at a traffic light, a blonde eyed the bulge in his shorts and asked, "What's that?" "Tennis ball," he replied. "That must be extremely painful," she said. "I once had tennis elbow."

* * *

THE BIG news this week came from the US where the third quarter GDP growth came in at an incredible 7.2 percent. The optimists were only going for 6 percent so this came as a bit of a shock. Consumer spending increased by 6.6 percent and big items like cars and trucks grew by over 20 percent. Part of this was undoubtedly due to the President's tax handouts in July and August, and few analysts expect it to be sustained. There was absolutely no reaction to this news and the stock market closed mixed with little movement. There is skepticism about the GDP figures, and many economists expect them to be revised downwards. Still, it is encouraging.

Consumer sentiment is rising but inventories are little changed, indicating that businessmen are not yet convinced that this momentum can continue into 2004. New jobless claims have been a little below the breakeven 400,000 level at 385,000. This would imply about 60,000 new jobs a month but this may be misleading as stores take on temporary workers for the Christmas season and the New Year sales. Treasurer John Snow boasted that 200,000 jobs would be created each month until the election. This claim looks impossible and the Administration rebuked him for it.

President Bush must be praying for an economic miracle because the situation in Iraq is becoming increasingly grim with the shooting down of a helicopter. The EU and

TIME / B3

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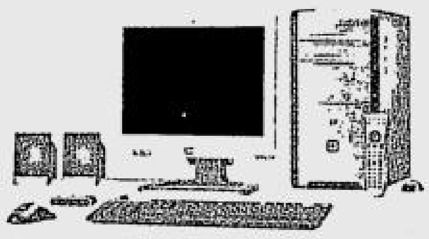
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3297, series of 2003.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of November 3, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	96,700
Bank of the Phil. Islands	45.5	46	45.5	45.5	717,800
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	36.5	36.5	36	36	94,800
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	580,000
First E-Bank Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	30,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	27.5	27.5	27	27	198,100
Philippine National Bank	26	26.5	26	26.5	7,400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1625	1630	1625	1630	10,220
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	34,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1340	1350	1340	1345	3,800
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	25,300
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.73	0.76	0.73	0.76	8,800,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	790	810	790	810	128,580
Island Info And Tech Inc.	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.044	100,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.043	0.043	0.04	0.042	31,900,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.85	0.91	0.85	0.91	23,480,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	760	785	755	780	269,440
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	44,100,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	143,000
Manila Electric Co. B	20.5	20.5	19.75	20.25	1,796,500
Petron Corp.	2.06	2.06	2.02	2.02	967,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	5,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	179,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	40,000
Negros Navigation Co.Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	40,000
William,Gothong & Aboitiz	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Cement Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	60,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	31	30	31	7,600
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	371,700
Swift Food Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	1,180,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56	57	56	57	46,100
San Miguel Corp. B	62.5	62.5	62	62	155,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	150,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	30,000
Ayala Corp.	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.2	11,052,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	80,000
Alcom Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	10,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	10,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.59	650,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.12	0.125	0.12	0.125	530,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.19	3,740,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	500,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	1,120,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	2,500,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	17.75	17.75	17.5	17.5	668,200
Global Equities Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.08	0.08	2,400,000
Ionics Inc.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	5,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	1,500,000
Keppel Holdings	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	2,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.14	1.18	1.14	1.16	6,583,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	4,770,000
Music Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	1,300,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	1,000,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	150,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	200,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	7.1	8	7.1	8	6,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.63	0.64	0.63	0.63	830,000
Manila Jockey Club	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1	5,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	110,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	240,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	28	28	28	28	559,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,200
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.4	6	56.	46.4	17,072,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	80,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	310,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	2,480,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	820,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.14	1,604,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	100,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	60,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	180,000
SM Development Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.04	1.04	220,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.4	7.5	7.4	7.4	18,356,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	50,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.24	0.245	0.24	0.24	2,290,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	5,410,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	24,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	20,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	310,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	10,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	7,800,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	2,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.21	0.235	0.21	0.235	100,000
Pacifica	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	1,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.17	0.19	0.13	0.13	1,410,000

CURRENCIES

November 3, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.862663906	1.000000	55.336000
Japan	Yen	0.007852	0.009102	0.503700
United Kingdom	Pound	1.463423	1.696400	93.872000
Hongkong	Dollar	0.111061	0.128742	7.124100
Switzerland	Franc	0.644067	0.746603	41.314000
Canada	Dollar	0.65383	0.757920	41.940300
Singapore	Dollar	0.496069	0.575043	31.820600
Australia	Dollar	0.610692	0.707914	39.173100
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.288355	2.652661	146.787600
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.230044	0.266667	14.756300
Brunei	Dollar	0.494646	0.573394	31.729300
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000102	0.000118	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.021631	0.025075	1.387600
UAE	Dirham	0.234879	0.272272	15.066400
Euro	Euro	1	1.159200	64.145500
Argentina	Peso	0.300057	0.347826	19.247300
Brazil	REAL	0.30142	0.349406	19.334700
Denmark	Kroner	0.134497	0.155909	8.627400
India	Rupee	0.019039	0.022070	1.221300
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.227047	0.263193	14.564000
Mexico	New Peso	0.078374	0.090851	5.027300
New Zealand	Dollar	0.527785	0.611808	33.855000
Norway	Kroner	0.121399	0.140726	7.787200
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015068	0.017467	0.966600
South Africa	Rand	0.125797	0.145824	8.069300
Korea	Won	0.000729	0.000845	0.046800
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025462	0.029516	1.633300

CalPERS seen . . .

From page B1

prove on areas where it was found deficient. Failure to do so will mean the permanent removed of the from the CalPERS' list. CalPERS will do a review on the Philippines' performance next year.

During the one-year cure period, CalPERS' investment managers will still be permitted to infuse investments into the Philippines.

Corazon Guidote, executive director of the Investor Relations Office, said government officials were working overtime to convince CalPERS to retain the Philippines on its list.

Earlier, the government, in a comprehensive reply sent to Wilshire and CalPERS' in reaction to the score given in February, claimed that the scoring had at least nine cases of inaccuracies and seven cases of inconsistencies.

Despite this, Wilshire, in a March 24 letter to CalPERS, held on to its recommendation to remove the Philippines from the list.

Stocks hit 18-mo high

From page B1

months in preparation for the Christmas season. However, further rally is expected to be capped by the stalemate between the Supreme Court and Congress on the impeachment case against SC Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

"For the remainder of the week, the market will be focusing on the third quarter corporate earnings results. The big companies are due to release their numbers in the next two weeks. Gains may not be sustained as political concerns plus worries about the deficit may keep investors at bay," Vistan warned.

LA SUERTE CASE

RTC bars BIR from collecting new cigarette tax

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PARAÑAQUE Regional Trial Court has issued an order temporarily barring the Bureau of Internal Revenue from collecting increased cigarette taxes from La Suerte Cigar and Cigarette Factory.

La Suerte welcomed the 20-day temporary restraining order and said it would pursue its case against the imposition of Revenue Regulations No. 22-2003, even after TRO lapses.

RR 22-2004 realigned excise taxes on new cigarette products introduced in the market since 1997.

Under the revenue regulation, cigarettes introduced since 1997 would have the following tax rates: P13.44 per pack with a net retail price of P10; P8.96 for packs costing P6.5-P10; P5.60 for each pack worth P5-P6.50; and P1.12 for packs worth less than P5.

La Suerte asked the Court for a TRO on grounds that the new excise taxes would increase the selling prices of its Astro and Memphis cigarette brands by as much as 400 percent.

The two brands, which were both introduced in the market after 1997, accounted for 98 percent of La Suerte's total production.

"Such a move considering the present state of our economy could eventually lead to retrenchment or in the worse scenario, a closure... and such injury is no less than irreparable," the court said in its Oct. 21 order issued by Parañaque RTC Judge Leoncia Real-Dimagiba.

An official from La Suerte said the company questioned the revenue regulation because it would only lay the burden of paying higher taxes on cigarette manufacturers that produce the latest brands of cigarettes.

This would hamper their ability to compete against producers of old cigarette brands.

The BIR, on the other hand, said it was bent on implementing RR No. 22-2003 despite these protests from various groups affected by the ruling.

Lanie Luna of the BIR's large taxpayers' division said in a telephone conversation that the BIR was obliged to implement the realigned excise taxes on cigarettes because Congress, through RA No. 8240, has mandated the BIR to do so.

She admitted, however, that manufacturers of new cigarette brands like La Suerte could indeed be adversely affected by the new tax rules.

She said the BIR believed the revenue agency will be allowed to impose the new tax rates on La Suerte after the 20-day TRO period.

She said the revenue regulation would result in additional revenue for the government and help ease its yawning budget deficit.

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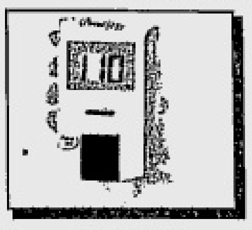

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Kanematsu bags ₱2.3-B geothermal deal

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PNOC Energy Development Corp. awarded last week the P2.3-billion contract to expand the generating capacity of the Palinpinon geothermal complex in Negros Oriental to Japan's Kanematsu Corp.

Under the contract, Kanematsu was tasked to build the power plant and the transmission lines as well as develop the steam field.

In an interview, PNOC-EDC chair Sergio Apostol said the groundwork in Palinpinon could start in two or three weeks following the awarding of the contract.

"The optimization project involves putting up an additional 20 megawatts of generating capacity," Apostol said.

The official added that the project was expected to be completed in two years.

"The additional generator [to be called Palinpinon III] would operate as a merchant plant. This is a first time for PNOC-EDC, but the project is being done to answer the requirements of a deregulated power industry," he said.

An operator of a merchant plant can sell electricity to any buyer as it does not have an exclusive supply contract with a distributor or an end-user.

Kanematsu bested bids of competitors from France, Italy and Germany as well as Australia.

PNOC-EDC's Palinpinon geothermal field is currently host to the National Power Corp.'s 192.5-MW power complex, which was commissioned in 1983.

Last April, Apostol said PNOC-EDC had secured a P1.4 billion facility from the Development Bank of the Philippines to finance the expansion project.

The loan will mature in 15 years with an 8-percent interest for the first 10 years and 11 percent for the remaining five years.

The fund would also cover costs of developing the site as well as the installation of transmission lines to connect the new power plant to the main power grid.

In December, the PNOC-EDC chief said the firm intended to borrow about P18 billion this year for various geothermal projects in the pipeline.

Apostol said that the planned loans would fund expansion and new generating plants in Southern Negros, Leyte and Southern Leyte.

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DTI to implement loan program for SMEs

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry is set to implement a loan program for small and medium enterprises that supply products to big retail chains.

The "Receivables Financing for Retail Trade Suppliers Program," which will be implemented through the DTI's SME financing arm Small Business Corp., is a direct lending program that aims to provide SME-suppliers with adequate working capital.

"The lack of working capital often impedes the growth of SMEs and a cause for failure especially for those unable to immediately convert their receivables to cash," said Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel Roxas II in a statement.

He said that while retail stores—such as supermarkets—provide stable markets for SMEs, quite a number of SME suppliers fail to sustain their operations because a significant amount of their capital is tied up in receivables for weeks or months.

Qualified SME applicants will be given a credit limit of P2 million and a one-year payment term period.

The loan program for retail-store suppliers is part of SB Corp.'s SME FIRST (Financing for Receivables Suppliers Transaction) program. SB Corp. has already released P232.5 million worth of loans as of September, and has exceeded its P150-million target for the first nine months of the year.

To qualify for the program, the SME must pass the following requirements: P15 million worth of assets; has been a supplier for a particular retail store for at least six consecutive months; engaged in the production, packaging, or repackaging and/or distribution of preferably locally made products for at least two years; possesses an efficient and reliable financial recording and bookkeeping system; and registration with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Cooperative Development Authority, Department of Trade and Industry, or any government agency tasked with registration of business entities.

The program will be initially limited to SMEs supplying to retail outlets or supermarkets belonging to the top 1,000 corporations and located within Metro Manila.

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Sun Life Fund raises capital

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE BOARD of Sun Life Canada Prosperity Bond Fund Inc. has approved the increase in its authorized capital from P2.8 billion to P3.8 billion.

In documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Sun Life fund said P342.5 million of the increase in authorized capital stock represents the subscription by various shareholders of 250.74 million shares.

The mutual fund said that gross investment income in the first nine months of this year grew 85.22 percent to P294.73 million from P159.13 million in the same period last year.

The growth was attributed to increased interest income from prime corporate loans and fixed-term notes as well as trading gains.

Sun Life fund posted an 85.57 percent increase in net investment income to P184.80 million from P99.59 million in the comparative period last year.

The fund's total assets was placed at P3.82 billion as of end-September this year or 30.95 percent higher than the P2.92 billion registered at the end of last year.

The fund's board also approved the appointment of a new external auditor, C.L. Manabat/Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu to replace SGV & Co. given that good corporate governance dictated that auditing and consulting work should not be performed by the same firm.

The fund said that SGV would be retained for consulting services.

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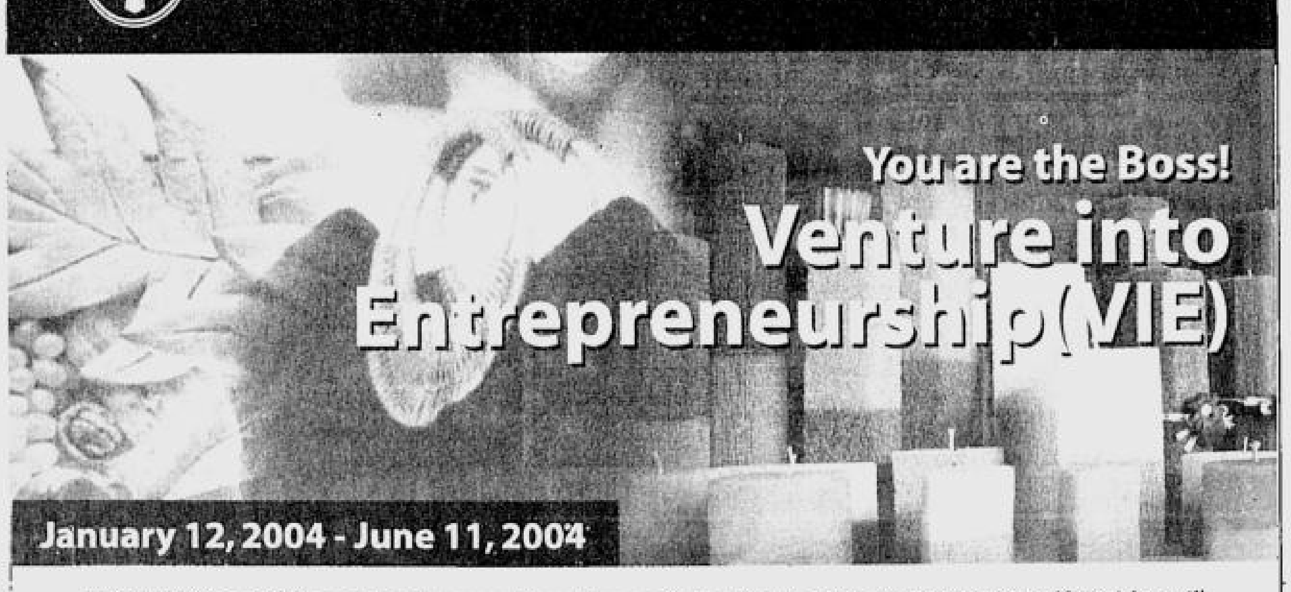
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Time to take 240% profit on TEL

From page B2

Russia are not going to help so he is facing a situation similar to Vietnam. About 90% of the S & P 500 companies have reported and profits are up 23%, year on year. Investors expect this to be continued into the fourth quarter and into next year, but the Fed indicated that it was still worried about the abnormally low rate of inflation. This means that the 1 percent rate will be held for quite some time.

Here, we only had a few third quarter earnings and the results start in earnest from next week when TEL and GLO are due to report. So far, BPI has produced profits up to 20 percent, whereas MBT produced a miserable 1.3 percent. PNB made a tiny profit for the third successive quarter and is floating $140 million worth of bonds next week. MBT's bonds were fungible, but I bet that Lucio's bonds are TANgible. AEV was disappointing with only a 3-percent rise in profits. This is a well-managed company and the shares have risen from P2.50 to P3.40 on buy-backs.

The gigantic cross sale of GLOBE has been completed, resulting in astronomical gross turnover. Once you extract the block sales at P680, the net turnover becomes more reasonable, with the bulk of the trading taking place in TEL, and to a lesser extent, GLOBE. TEL is extremely liquid and there has been huge two-way trading between the foreign brokers. In the past few days, they have been net sellers of TEL and net buyers of GLOBE. Estimates have been raised to P3.5 billion for the third quarter of TEL and even, more in the fourth quarter, which is always the best as it includes Christmas.

If these figures are met, I fear that there will be more write-offs because I believe there is a franchise-tax liability nationwide amounting to P4.5 billion. This will probably be written-off this year and next, while the company is still expanding but that will make a dent in the profits. I recommended the shares at P226 and I think it is time to take a profit at P780.

I may, of course, be horribly wrong and in any case, any correction will probably be temporary. By end January, the shares should be up again ahead of the full results. When I was working in London, I was at one time the head of Research at Laing & Cruickshank, now Credit Lyonnais. I did a very detailed study of the 30 stocks in the Financial Times index over a period of 10 years. I found that providing the market was in an upward trend and the company was expected to produce good results; it was right 90 percent of the time to BUY the shares one to two weeks before the announcement and SELL the day before.

What happened was that speculators scanned the newspapers for dividends due and bought these shares a week or so ahead, thereby creating a bull position. Even if the results were up to the best expectations, the shares did not move higher as everybody who wanted to own the shares had already bought them. So the stock gradually went down as speculators get fed up and sold. If the results were not up to scratch, the shares fell sharply with everyone trying to get out at the same time. The same phenomenon also applied to Wall Street and it may also apply here. We shall see during the next two weeks.

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3 UPTOWN GIRLS 12:05MF,2:15,4:20, 6:30,9:00LMF-10:40END
4 THE PHONE 12:05MF,2:15,4:20, 6:30,9:00LMF-10:40END
5 MY FIRST ROMANCE 11:50MF,2:20,4:50, 7:20,9:50LMF-11:45END
6 IDENTITY 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:55
7 MAPUPULANG LABI 10:30,12:45, 3:00, 5:15,7:30,9:55,11:45
8 AMERICAN PIE:THE WEDDING 11:00,1:10,3:20,5:30 7:40,9:50, 11:30
9 FREAKY FRIDAY 11:10,1:20,3:30,5:40, 7:50,10:00,11:45
10 MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER 11:25,1:30,3:35, 5:40 7:45,9:50,11:25

MATINEE PRICE: P100 THX cinema / P75 1level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita
526-7185
536-7809 to 12

1 MY FIRST ROMANCE 10:10,12:30,2:50,5:10,7:30,9:50,11:50
2 THE RUNDOWN 10:10,12:30,2:50,5:10,7:30,9:50,11:35
3 UPTOWN GIRLS 11:05,12:55,2:45,4:35,6:25,8:15,10:00,11:30
4 THE PHONE 11:05MF,12:55,2:45,4:35,6:25,8:15,10:00LMF,11:40END
5 MAPUPULANG LABI 10:30, 12:45,3:00,5:15,7:30,9:45 11:20
6 IDENTITY 11:15,1:20,3:25,5:30,7:35,9:40, 11:10
7 THE SPY 10:30,12:45,3:00,5:15,7:30,9:45, 11:20

Metro East
Marcos hway
682-8193/99
682-8280

1 MY FISRST ROMANCE
2 THE SPY
3 THE RUNDOWN
4 UPTOWN GIRLS
5 MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER
6 AMERICAN PIE:THE WEDDING
7 IDENTITY
8 MAPUPULANG LABI

Novaliches
935-3229 / 31

1 THE RUNDOWN
2 MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER
3 IDENTITY
4 THE PHONE
5 MY FIRST ROMANCE
6 THE SPY
7 AMERICAN PIE:THE WEDDING
8 MAPUPULANG LABI

Star Mills (045)875-1927 (045)961-5270		Imus (046)471-0188 / 875-5858
HOUSE OF 1,000 CORPSES	1	IDENTITY
PILYA	2	THE SPY
MY FIRST ROMANCE	3	THE PHONE
TREK	4	THE RUNDOWN
UNDERWORLD	5	MY FIRST ROMANCE
THE RUNDOWN	6	MAPUPULANG LABI

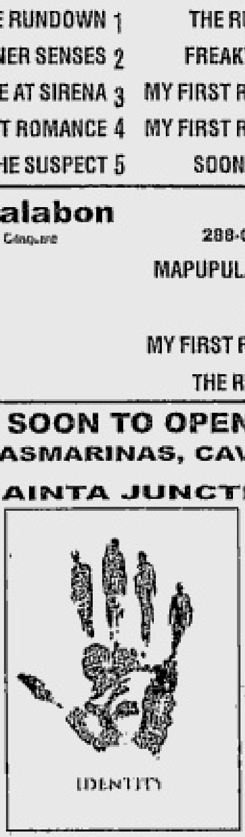
Bacolod (034)441-0458/59		Iloilo (033)336-8070 to 78
THE RUNDOWN	1	THE RUNDOWN
MEDALLION	2	AMERICAN PIE:THE WEDDING
MY FIRST ROMANCE	3	MATCHSTICK MEN
FREDDY VS. JASON	4	MY FIRST ROMANCE
INNER SENSES	5	BUGBOG SARADO
KATAS	6	UNDERWORLD

Sta. Rosa (049)837-0007		Lipa, Batangas
THE RUNDOWN	1	THE RUNDOWN
INNER SENSES	2	FREAKY FRIDAY
PRISIPE AT SIRENA	3	MY FIRST ROMANCE
MY FIRST ROMANCE	4	MY FIRST ROMANCE
THE SUSPECT	5	SOON TO OPEN

Malabon
288-0985/2575

1 MAPUPULANG LABI
2 IDENTITY
3 MY FIRST ROMANCE
4 THE RUNDOWN

SOON TO OPEN
DASMARINAS, CAVITE
CAINTA JUNCTION



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2ND WEEK

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THE SPY PG13 12:45,2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	UPTOWN GIRLS PG13 1:25, 3:35, 5:45, 7:55, 10:00	THE RUNDOWN PG13 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
MY FIRST ROMANCE GP 12:10, 2:35, 5:00, 7:25, 9:50	MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER R13 12:00,1:45, 3:30, 5:20, 7:10, 9:00	IDENTITY R18 12:20, 2:20, 4:20, 6:20, 8:20, 10:20

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

THEATRE MALL

GREENHILLS

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 **THE RUNDOWN**
11:35, 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00
P13

CINEMA 2 **THE SPY**
11:35, 1:50, 4:10, 6:30, 8:40
P13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA

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NOV 11	"RE-LOADED" NYOY VOLANTE & MANNOS	9:00PM

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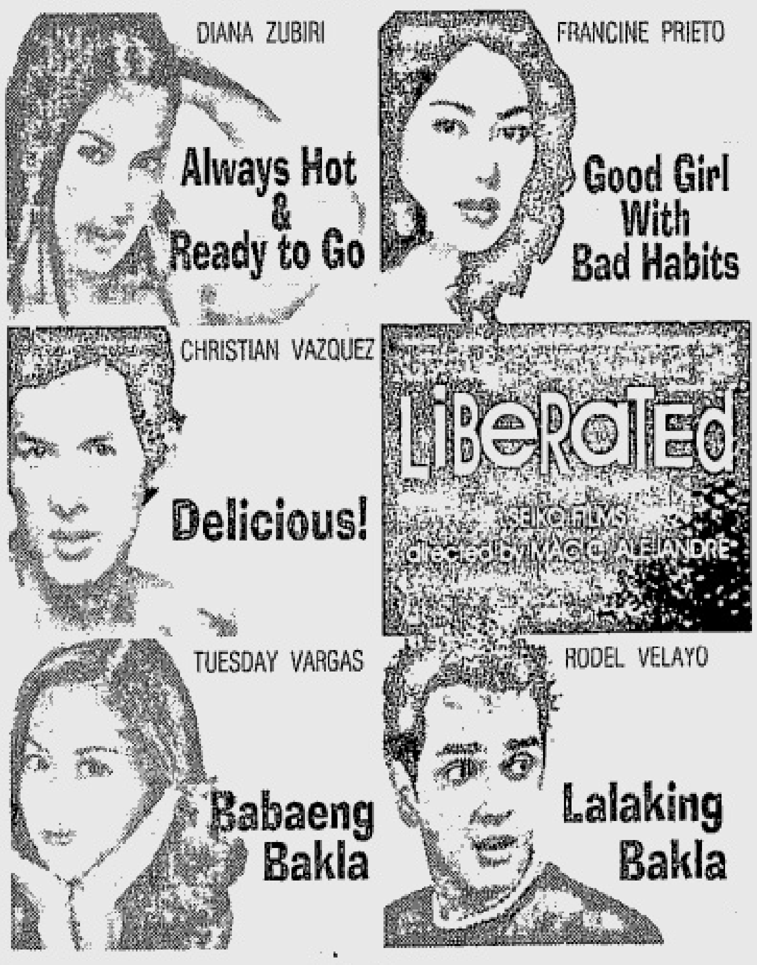

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1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6567685

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

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Office of the Treasurer
B-0-A-B

NOTICE OF AUCTION SALE

To satisfy the real estate tax deliquency of the following taxpayers, computation of which includes interest, surcharges and penalties thereon as of July 2003 and after substantially complying with the pertinent provisions of Republic Act. 7160, the City Mayor through the undersigned City Treasurer, hereby gives notice to all interested parties and to the public in general that on **November 7, 2003 at 9:00 o'clock in the morning at the Legislative Building, 2nd Floor City Hall of Parañaque,** the City Treasurer or his authorized representatives will sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash and in Philippines Currency, the real estate properties described below:

	Declared Owner	Area (Sqm.)	Classification/ Delqcy. Date	Tax Dec. Numbers	Amount of Delinquency	Interest Due As of July, 2003	Total Amt. Of Delinquency
1.	BERMA MGT. CORP. GR. FLR. COM. BLDG. FIRST FLOOR SECOND FLOOR THIRD FLOOR FOURTH FLOOR FIFTH FLOOR SIXTH FLOOR SEVENTH FLOOR ROOF DECK TYPICAL UPPER AND LOWER BASEMENT PARKING LOT 2,3,4,5,10,11,12,13 BLK.4 REDEMPTORIST ROAD, BARANGAY BACLARAN	1,383.88 1,383.88 1,550.58 1,550.58 1,626.85 413.83 1,606.53 906.81 1,462.75 1,383.88 1,383.88	COM. IMPVT. 1999-2003	E002-06646	15,769,457.55	8,017,524.15	23,786,981.70
2.	BERMA MGT. CORP. ESCALATOR CHILLER PROJECTORS GENSET WATER PUMP ELEVATOR REDEMPTORIST RD., BARANGAY BACLARAN		COM. MACH. 1999-2003	E002-06647	2,132,270.25	1,084,091.07	3,216,361.32
3.	HERNANDO DELA CRUZ/ ATTY. IN FACT DR. RUBEN CAMURUNGAN TCT NO. 99350, LOT 9-A TCT NO. 99352, LOT 9-B TCT NO. 99353, LOT 9-C BO IBAYO, BGY. SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	265.127 75.531 110.517 79.079	RES. LOT 1996-2003	E012-04114	7,741,708.40	4,937,725.28	12,679,433.68
4.	HERNANDO DELA CRUZ / ATTY. IN FACT DR. RUBEN CAMURUNGAN TCT NO 99346, LOT 8-A TCT NO 99347, LOT 8-B TCT NO. 99348, LOT 8-C TCT NO. 99349, LOT 8-D VILLONCO ROAD, BGY. B.F. HOMES	87.817 39.802 23.677 12.642 11.696	RES. LOT 1996-2003	E001-06413 Pablo J. Martinez	7,482,008.40	4,754,763.68	12,236,772.08
5.	HERNANDO DELA CRUZ / ATTY. IN FACT DR. RUBEN CAMURUNGAN TCT NO. 99351, LOT 10-A TCT NO 99354, LOT 10-B BO IBAYO, BGY. SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	125.166 56.284 68.882	RES. LOT 1996-2003	E012-04115	3,654,847.20	2,331,091.60	5,985,938.80
6.	L.G. MATHIESON DEV. CORP. TCT-(S-5206) 93649 LOT B-1 SOUTH SUPER HIGHWAY, BGY. MARCELO	10,000	LAND IND. 1981-2003	E006-02882	2,248,950.00	1,548,774.00	3,797,724.00
7.	LUZON AGGREGATES INC. TCT NO. (S-17821) 22889-T-115, LOT 4474-B BGY. MARCELO GREEN	10,000	IND'L. LOT 1998-2003	E008-03059	1,125,000.00	661,500.00	1,786,500.00
8.	EDMUNDO S. SILVERIO TCT NO. (452442) 131540 LOT 9 SOUTH SUPER HIGHWAY, BGY. SUN VALLEY	5,364.75	LAND IND. 1998-2003	E014-04444 PURISIMA H. VER	1,106,480.10	675,958.67	1,782,438.77
9.	EDMUNDO S. SILVERIO TCT NO. (452448) 131541 LOT 5 SOUTH SUPER HIGHWAY, BGY. SUN VALLEY	5,000	LAND IND. 1999-2003	E014-04442 PURISIMA H. VER	1,031,250.00	630,000.00	1,661,250.00
10.	(INLAND TRAILWAYS CO., INC.) JOY REALTY CORP. (New Owner) TCT No. - 132744 IMELDA AVE., BRGY. STO. NIÑO	2,420	LAND 1986-2003	E013-00026 INLAND TRAILWAYS CO., INC.	692,241.00	579,870.72	1,272,111.72
11.	ARIES HOLDINGS INC. 30TH FLR. PENTHOUSE CCT NO. 7641 GOLDEN BAY COND. CLEVELAND TOWER MARINA, BGY. DON GALO	615.06	CONDO. PENTHOUSE 1998-2003	E004-02715	386,996.50	202,645.44	589,641.94
12.	ALFREDO C. APO TCT NO. (220651) 109132, LOT 2-B SOUTH SUPER HIGHWAY, BGY. MARCELO	451	IND LAND 1993-2003	E006-01209	165,066.00	101,596.77	266,662.77
13.	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO. 16306, LOT 1 BLK 6, MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY. SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	797	RES. LAND 1997-2003	E012-01938	20,722.00	12,815.76	33,537.76
14.	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO. 16313, LOT 2 BLK. 2 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY. SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	136	RES. LAND 1997-2003	E012-02210	3,536.00	2,186.88	5,722.88
15.	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO. 16314 LOT 1 BLK. 2 CORNER LOT 1 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS, BGY. SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	10	RES. LAND 1997-2003	E012-02211	286.00	176.88	462.88
16.	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO. 16307, LOT 1 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY. SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	2,280	ROAD LOT 1997-2003	E012-02212	29,640.00	18,331.20	47,971.20
17.	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO. 16308, LOT 2 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY. SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	1,378	ROAD LOT 1997-2003	E012-02213	17,914.00	11,079.12	28,993.12
18.	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO. 16311, LOT 3 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY. SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	351	ROAD LOT 1997-2003	E012-02214	4,563.00	2,822.12	7,385.12
19.	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO. 16309, LOT 4 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY. SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	294	ROAD LOT 1997-2003	E012-02215	3,822.00	2,363.76	6,185.76
20.	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO. 16310, LOT 5 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY. SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	345	ROAD LOT 1997-2003	E012-02216	4,485.00	2,773.88	7,258.88
21.	OCTAVIO YU GUEVARRA TCT-88731 LOT 13 BLK. 1 BETTER LIVING SUBD. BARANGAY DON BOSCO	285	RES. LOT 1979-2003	E003-02060	17,900.40	19,153.26	37,053.66
22.	DANILO G. ARENAS TCT-28268, LOT 4 BLK. 7 EQUITY HOMES BARANGAY MARCELO	150	RES. LOT 1996-2003	E006-04793	3,720.00	2,296.80	6,016.80
23.	DANILO G. ARENAS HOUSE PATIO LANAI ATTIC CARPORT FENCE LOT 4 BLK. 7 EQUITY HOMES, BARANGAY MARCELO	51.4 5.6 9.6 6.8 19 18	RES. IMP. 1996-2003	E006-04794	19,566.40	12,075.32	31,641.72
24.	RODOLFO, FLORDELIZA BACAR TCT-78992, LOT 13 BLK. 24 SEVERINA DIAMOND SUBDIVISION BARANGAY MARCELO GREEN	225	RES. LOT 2000-2003	E006-04445	3,150.00	1,674.00	4,824.00
25.	RODOLFO & FLORDELIZA BACAR TCT - (100213) 78991 LOT 15 BLK. 24 SEVERINA DIAMOND SUBDIVISION BARANGAY MARCELO GREEN	426	RES. LOT 2000-2003	E006-04446	6,560.40	3,486.42	10,046.82
26.	RODOLFO & FLORDELIZA BACAR BUNGALOW LOT 15 SEVERINA DIAMOND SUBD. BARANGAY MARCELO GREEN	218.75	IMPVT. 2000-2003	E006-04447	17,750.60	9,433.14	27,183.74
					Grand Total		69,316,101.12

(Sgd.) LIBERATO M. CARABEO
City Treasurer

(PDI – October 27 & November 4, 2003)

POEA 24-HR HOTLINES
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Canadian Embassy
Manila

Ambassade du Canada
Manille

L'Ambassade du Canada à Manille,
suite à son déménagement à une nouvelle chancellerie,
annonce son changement d'adresse et de numéro de téléphone.
Ceux-ci seront en vigueur dès le 4 novembre.
L'Ambassade ne sera fermée que le vendredi 31 octobre et le lundi 3 novembre.

L'AMBASSADE DU CANADA À MANILLE EST SITUÉE AU:

Niveau 6, 7, et 8, Tour 2
RCBC Plaza
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P.O. Box 2168

Le public peut maintenant rejoindre l'ambassade en utilisant ces nouveaux numéros:
Tél: 857-90-01
Fax: 843-10-82

Pour les demandes de visa et les affaires concernant l'immigration
S.V.P. contactez le centre d'appel:
1-909-1018888 (PLDT)
1-903-1018888 (BAYANTEL)
1-900-1018888 (GLOBE)
(Les frais d'appel sont de Php18.00 par minute.)

Pour de plus amples informations, consultez notre site web:
www.manila.gc.ca

Pour des questions spécifiques, vous pouvez rejoindre:

Section	Telephone	Fax
Immigration et Visa	857-90-02	843-10-94/96
Gestion/Consulaire	857-90-01	843-10-82
le Service des Délégués Commerciaux du Canada	857-90-95/857-91-31	843-10-80
agence canadienne de développement international (ACDI)	857-91-33/857-91-20/857-91-21	843-10-83
Relations Politiques et Economiques/Affaires Publiques	857-90-13	843-10-78

Canadian Embassy
Manila

Ambassade du Canada
Manille

The Canadian Embassy, Manila
announces its change of address and contact numbers
due to its move to its new chancery effective
04 November 2003.
The Embassy will *only* be closed on
Friday, October 31 and Monday, November 3.

THE CANADIAN EMBASSY, MANILA IS LOCATED AT

Level 6, 7, and 8, Tower 2
RCBC Plaza
6819 Ayala Avenue
Makati City 1200
P.O. Box 2168

The public may contact the Embassy through the new trunklines:
Tel: 857-90-01
Fax: 843-10-82

For visa application and immigration matters,
please contact the Call Centre:
1-909-1018888 (PLDT)
1-903-1018888 (BAYANTEL)
1-900-1018888 (GLOBE)
(Call charges at Php18.00 per minute)

Comprehensive information on visa applications
may be obtained from our website: www.manila.gc.ca

For specific concerns, you may reach the following sections:

Section	Telephone	Fax
Immigration and Visa	857-90-02	843-10-94/96
Management and Consular	857-90-01	843-10-82
Trade Commissioner Service	857-90-95/857-91-31	843-10-80
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)	857-91-33/857-91-20/857-91-21	843-10-83
Political, Economic Relations, and Public Affairs	857-90-13	843-10-78

Canadian Embassy
Manila

Ambassade du Canada
Manille

Ang Pasuguan ng Canada sa Maynila
ay ibinabalita ang pagpapalit ng tanggapan at telepono
simula ika-apat ng Nobyembre 2003.
Ang Pasuguan ay sarado lamang sa Biyernes, ika-31 ng Oktubre at Lunes, ika 3 ng Nobyembre.

Ang Pasuguan ng Canada sa MAYNILA ay nasa

Palapag 6, 7, at 8 ng Tower 2
RCBC Plaza
6819 Ayala Avenue
Makati City 1200
P.O. Box 2168

Maaaring tumawag o magpadala ng liham ang publiko sa mga sumusunod:
Tel: 857-90-01
Fax: 843-10-82

Para sa aplikasyon sa bisa at mga bagay tungkol sa imigrasyon,
mangyaring tumawag sa Call Centre:
1-909-1018888 (PLDT)
1-903-1018888 (BAYANTEL)
1-900-1018888 (GLOBE)
(Php18.00 ang halaga ng tawag kada minuto)

Ang pangkalahatang kaalaman ukol sa aplikasyon sa bisa
ay maaaring makuha mula sa aming website:
www.manila.gc.ca

Para sa partikular na serbisyo, maaring tawagan ang mga
sumununod na tanggapan:

Seksyon	Telepono	Fax
Immigration and Visa	857-90-02	843-10-94/96
Management and Consular	857-90-01	843-10-82
Trade Commissioner Service	857-90-95/857-91-31	843-10-80
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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that estate of the late EUGENIO AGUILAR TABUENA was extrajudicially settled and partioned with waiver of rights by the heirs as per Doc. No.370; Page No.79; Book No.56; Series 2003 before Notary Public Manuel F. de Jesus of QC.
PDI-Oct. 28, Nov. 4 & 11, 2003

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late CATHERINA FREDERIKA UYBOCO MORANDI was extrajudicially settled by the heirs as per Doc. #261 Page #45 Book #X1 Series of 2003 by Notary Public Atty. Ramon F. Aviado Jr. of Quezon City
(PDI- October 21, 28 & Nov. 4, 2003)

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O Holy St. Anthony, gentlest of Saints, your love for God and charity for His creatures, made you worthy, when on earth, to possess miraculous powers. Miracles waited on your word, which you were ever ready to speak for those in trouble or anxiety. Encouraged by this thought, I implore of you to obtain for me (request). The answer to my prayer may require a miracle, even so, you are the Saint of Miracles. O gentle and loving St. Anthony, whose heart was ever full of human sympathy, whisper my petition into the ears of the Sweet Infant Jesus, who loved to be folded in your arms; and the gratitude of my heart will ever be yours. (Thank you very much for the graces.)

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2nd Runner up Fuji Finepix 2600, VMV products and Link package from Kasal.com
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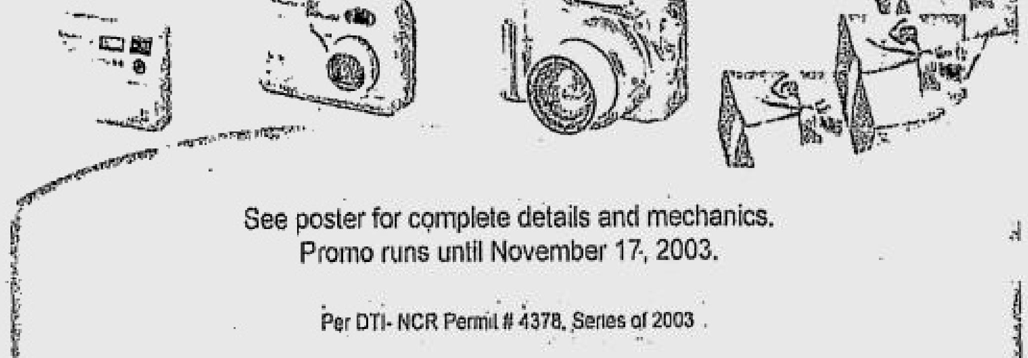
Deadline of entries is November 17, 2003, 6:00pm



See poster for complete details and mechanics.
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I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 14:6

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die."

John 11:25-26

ACELA M. CABUYADAO

(Wife of the late Manuel N. Cabuyadao)

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on November 2, 2003 at the age of 88.

Her loving children **ELMO** and **CHATO**, **NINA** and **ANGELO**; grandchildren **ANTHONY**, **ALLEN**, **ABBY** and **APPLE**; great grandchild **HUEY**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Funeraria Paz, South Wing Chapel 5, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

She will be laid to rest at Himlayang Pilipino, Quezon City on Thursday, November 6, 2003 after the 8:30 a.m. Mass.

MARCELINO B. ASUZANO, JR.

of Zamboanga City

has peacefully joined our Creator
on the 1st day of November 2003 at the age of 84.

His bereaved wife **Leticia**; children **Bambi**, **Bonnie Rose** & Jim Gearhart, **Ruby Ann** & George Kyriakides, & **Nicole**; grandchildren **Miggy**, **Jamie**, **Alexandra** & **Nicolas**; brother **Manoling**, sisters **Baby** & **Nena**; nephews and nieces; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel H, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Funeral Mass will be celebrated at Loyola Memorial Chapel H, Guadalupe, Makati City at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, November 7, 2003.

Cremation will immediately follow at Loyola Crematorium, Guadalupe, Makati City.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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The Board of Directors, Medical Staff and Employees
of the
CAPITOL MEDICAL CENTER, INC.
sincerely convey its condolence to the family of the late

EDUARDO MIGUEL "MIKE" INES CUYEGKENG

Former Member, Board of Directors
on his demise.

His remains lie in state at the Santa Maria Dela Strada Parish, Katipunan Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on November 5, 2003 at the Loyola Memorial Park Crematorium, Marikina City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Dela Strada Parish.

REV. FR. HENRY SHCMITZ, S.V.D.

Peacefully joined his Creator
on November 2, 2003.

His remains lie in state at St. Therese Parish Church, Dagupan City, from November 4 in the morning to November 5 midnight.

Funeral Mass at 3:00 p.m., November 7 at Christ the King Seminary, E. Rodriguez Blvd., Quezon City. Interment follows immediately after.

CLASSIFIEDS

LEYTE-CEBU INTERCONNECTION PROJECT CONTRACT SIGNING,
TransCo
KAN TSU-J POW

Pic 1(LC class pic): With the aim of transporting the additional power requirements of the Cebu-Negros-Panay subgrid by first quarter of 2005, the US$68.5-million Leyte-Cebu Interconnection Project contract was formally signed Oct. 27, 2003 at the Department of Energy. The contract was signed by TransCo President Alan T. Ortiz and Juniche Yuge, Director of Kanematsu Corp. The event was also attended by Energy Undersecretary Cyril del Callar and officials from TransCo, the Department of Finance, Napocor, Kanematsu and J Power Systems.

CONTRACT SIGNING
POWER

Pic 2 (LC handshake): TransCo President Alan T. Ortiz and Juniche Yuge, Director of Kanematsu Corp. during the formal contract signing of the Leyte-Cebu Interconnection Project.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Third Elementary Education Project
Division of Zamboanga del Sur
J. Alano St., Pagadian City
Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION FOR BID

November 4, 2003

To All Qualified Bidders:

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) towards the cost of financing the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments for civil works component of the project. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.*
2. The Division Bids and Awards Committee (DBAC) invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the following projects and its location to wit:

PACKAGE NO.	PROJECT LOCATION	PCAB Category	DATE OF OPENING OF BIDS
ZDS-NCB-18-009	A. Margosatubig, Zamboanga del Sur 1. Const. of 1 unit – 1 CL SB in Talanusa ES 2. Const. of 1 unit – 1 CL SB in San Roque ES	Medium "A"	Dec. 4, 2003; 10:00 AM
ZDS-NCB-01/29-010	A. Tambulig, Zamboanga del Sur 1. Const. of 1 unit – 1 CL SB in San Jose PS* 2. Const. of 1 unit – 1 CL SB in San Vicente* B. Aurora, Zamboanga del Sur 1. Const. of 1 unit – 2 CL SB in Romarate PS	Medium "A"	Dec. 4, 2003; 2:00 PM

* - Multi Grade Type Building

3. Bidding documents may be purchased at DepEd Division Office of Zamboanga del Sur with office address at J.S. Alano St., Pagadian City for a non-refundable fee of PhP 3,500.00 for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.
4. Bids shall be valid for a period of ninety (90) days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a security in the amount of 2.5% of total bid price, and shall be delivered to Division's Bids and Awards Committee, Department of Education – Division Office of Zamboanga del Sur, J.S. Alano St., Pagadian City on or before above stated time and dates, at which they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.
5. For clarification, a Pre-Bid Conference will be conducted on November 17, 2003 at 10:00 A.M. at the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent, Division of Zamboanga del Sur, J. Alano St., Pagadian City.

(Sgd.) **VISMINDA G. SERRATO**
Chairperson
Division Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – November 4, 2003)

BUSINESS

Robinsons buys Boni property

By Doris C. Dumlao

ROBINSONS Land Corp., the property arm of the Gokongwei group, has acquired a 4,000-square meter prime property in the Fort Bonifacio Global City, which it will convert into another high-end residential project worth about P1 billion.

A source from the Gokongwei group yesterday told the INQUIRER that RLC recently purchased the property—which is located along the embassy row near the Essensa tower—from the Fort Bonifacio Development Co.

FBDC, controlled by the Ayala and Campos groups, is the developer of the 150-hectare Fort Bonifacio Global City.

The source estimated that the Gokongwei group would spend about P1 billion to complete the condominium tower project in about three years.

"But we won't begin construction right away. Maybe, next year (we will)," the source added.

The negotiated sale marks the Gokongwei group's first foray into the Fort Bonifacio complex. It earlier planned to forge a joint venture with FBDC —then controlled by Metro Pacific Corp.—to build a shopping mall in the area but talks fizzled out.

The source declined to say how much the Gokongwei group paid for the property, but analysts expect the selling price to be higher than the P35,000/square meter valuation when the Ayala-Campos group took over early this year.

Piltel cuts loss to ₱1.3B

By Abigail L. Ho

CASH-STRAPPED Pilipino Telephone Corp. posted a net loss of P1.3 billion in the first nine months of the year, 55 percent lower than the P2.9 billion in the same period a year ago.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Piltel attributed the net loss reduction to the continued strong performance of its global system for mobile communications (GSM) brand Talk 'N Text.

From January to September, Talk 'N Text accounted for 91 percent of the firm's subscriber revenue, with gross revenue increasing by 21 percent to P6.3 billion from P4.9 billion in the same period last year.

Net revenue from Talk 'N Text grew by 56 percent to P2.6 billion as of end-September from P1.6 billion the year before.

Talk 'N Text continued to be a strong no. 3 brand in the GSM market with more than 2.5 million subscribers as of the end of the third quarter, up 52 percent from last year's almost 1.7 million.

"Our solid subscriber growth was supported to a large extent by the launch in May of TNT Load, the groundbreaking over-the-air loading mechanism developed by Smart," Piltel president and chief executive Gregorio Atienza said.

The 40-percent decline in Piltel's operating costs to P2.8 billion in the first three quarters from P4.6 billion last year also helped bring down the company's net loss in the first nine months.

Other expenses increased by 178 percent due to foreign exchange loss of P1 billion from only P155 million last year. The company also booked an impairment charge of P280 million for its investment in ACeS Philippines Cellular Satellite Corp.

Without the effects of the foreign exchange losses and non-recurring items, the company's (earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization) was approximately P850 million.

Ayala boosts development in S. Luzon

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

DESPITE the generally soft real estate market, the country's largest real estate developer Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) has not lost its confidence in the Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon) area.

Its Ayala South project in the region, spanning '2,500 hectares, will soon become the country's biggest fully integrated community.

Vincent Tan, ALI executive vice president for planning, said the development continues as ALI itself turns 15 and its mother firm, Ayala Corp. and other Ayala subsidiaries pour in resources to complete other projects such as Ayala South's Westgrove Heights, Ayala Canlubang Estate and Ayala Greenfields.

Tan said ALI had many reasons to continue real estate developments in the Calabarzon area.

These include the supportive local governments, the national government's expansion of the South Luzon Expressway and road networks, thriving industrial zones, growing population, adequate water supply, flood-free environment and increasing opportunities for residential, recreational, business and commercial districts.

"There's a lot of potential in the whole of Calabarzon. A lot of activities are going on in the south," said Tan.

Ayala has known the area for quite some time.

Long history

In 1989, right in the middle of the most serious coup d'etat to hit the government, Ayala's Laguna Property Holdings went ahead with the development of the Laguna Techno Park and even the Sta. Rosa Homes, its first mass housing project in the area.

ALI, Tan said, is "not starting from scratch."

Its track record is boosted by the 60 years of experience of Ayala Corp., whose real estate division developed the country's top business and residential districts: Makati, Ayala Alabang and Ayala Heights.

"We have really established that we could do it.. "When we look at all the patterns, the direction of movements follows the southward trend," he added.

ALI worked with experts such as Calthrope Associates; Helber, Hastert and Young; Wallace Roberts and Todd; and Belt Collins International for its developments in the south.

Launched in 1998, Westgrove Heights in Cavite has drawn in about 50 families and dozens more are planning to settle within the 350-hectare estate. On a rolling terrain and surrounded by mango trees, it is any family's dream place.

Over time, the value of land at Westgrove had shot up from P7,200 per square meter to P10,000 per square meter—a moderate increase considering the times.

"Our business is we add value to the land. As far as the customers are concerned, not all that value is captured into the selling price. Some of that value comes after they buy," Tan says.

In Ayala Alabang, for example, the price of land, beginning at P250 square meter in 1970, is now 57 times higher.

Education hub

Westgrove is also turning out to be part of an educational hub. Close to it are the St. Scholastica's College, De La Salle University, Xavier School, Brent School, the University of Asia and the Pacific and Don Bosco College.

Like Westgrove, Ayala Greenfield just outside of Calamba City is also a high-end residential community given its location and lush scenery.

Ayala Canlubang, on the other, is the centerpiece of the Ayala South.

"This will be the most complete community," Tan said of the mix of residence, recreation, businesses planned there. "By providing the right facilities, we can attract the right businesses and the locators."

Aside from Calabarzon, it is also active in Cebu and Bacolod cities.

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Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

Lawmakers urged to prioritize housing

NATIONAL LAND BILL

By Charles E. Buban

THE DEPARTMENT of Interior and Local Government, the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, the Subdivision and Housing Developers Association and various local government units (LGUs) supported a move to make housing a priority in the National Land Use bill at present pending before Congress.

In a resolution signed during the LGU Shelter Conference held recently at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati City, the parties said the proposed bill should also consider the urgent housing needs of the country.

"Different sectors must come together and help our lawmakers come up with a law that strikes balance between land use for people's shelter and support infrastructure and the preservation of the environment and natural resources," said SHDA national president Marilu Alferez, one of those who signed the resolution.

Government and private sector estimates show the country's housing backlog stands at 4 million. This means the country would need around 700,000 units a year for the next 20 years to meet a population growth rate of 2.4 percent a year.

National land use policy

Pending before the 12th Congress, the National Land Use bill seeks to provide a national land use policy and planning network and their implementing mechanism.

One of the bill's features is the National Land Use and Planning framework that would define the indicative priorities for land use and allocation.

Started in 1993, the National Land Use Act seeks to address growing concern on the impact of rapid expansion of urban centers, shopping malls, golf courses, industrial sites and massive subdivisions.

Collective action

The conference was convened to serve as a venue for the LGUs, the national government agencies and the private sector to identify and discuss prevailing issues and concerns on housing.

"(The government) needs the LGUs, private sector and the civil society to close ranks and do their share in fast-tracking the approval and implementation of housing projects and in meeting the housing needs of the people," said Interior Secretary Jose Lina Jr.

Lina reiterated that the DILG has already issued several memorandum circulars including prescribing time standards in the issuance of development permits for housing, implementing guidelines of Executive Order 45, and prescribing time periods of issuance of housing-related certifications, clearances and permits to streamline the procedures and processes needed to be complied with by private developers.

EO 45 prescribes time periods for issuance of housing-related certifications, clearances and permits, and imposing sanctions for failure to observe the same.

Aiding developers

"These DILG memorandums were intended to aid developers in reaching their targeted number of housing units built and we need to make this clear to the LGUs why we need their cooperation," explained SHDA chair Jesus Atencio.

With the resolution, all LGUs concerned agreed to dispose of and act upon applications for development permits within 30 days as prescribed in EO 45.

"Although this was already in EO 45, delays still occur in the local government level as there still exist confusions, which through this conference we hope to address," said Alferez.

Accepting bonds

Included in the resolution, the LGUs also agreed to accept Socialized Housing bonds from developers as compliance to the 20 percent Balanced Housing requirements of RA 7279 (otherwise known as the Urban Development and Housing Act).

The LGUs will also offer incentives to developers and entice them to develop and locate their projects in their respective localities through fiscal and other modes of incentives (fee exemptions, tax credits, special windows to fast-track approvals of permits, socialized housing credits, among others).

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PLACE OF CONVERGENCE

Verdana Village Center attracts traders

ENTREPRENEURS setting up community-based businesses find Cavite's new commercial development, the Verdana Village Center, as an attractive crosspoint and place of convergence for Southern Metro Manila.

The Community Innovations Inc.'s Verdana Village Center will serve as a gateway to the Greater Cavite area and entrepreneurs are seeing benefits in its distinct features as a well-planned and well-designed commercial center.

30 commercial lots

The CII, an Ayala Land subsidiary, offers 30 commercial lots in two phases, with Phase 1 offering an initial 18 lots and Phase 2 following with 12 lots, totaling 1.8 hectares of commercial space.

Prices start at P5.2 million for one commercial lot. Its location makes it a focus of organized and planned development in the area, pulling together restaurants, cafés, convenience stores, entertainment, sports and recreational facilities, health and medical offices, banks and services, even schools and educational facilities, into one contemporary and fashionable hotspot.

Transformation

As Metro Manila continues to expand, the towns and villages of Cavite grow with it, undergoing massive changes merely in the last decade. Housing developments and upscale residential villages, including CII's own top-selling Verdana Homes subdivision, have transformed the area into an extension of the metropolis.

Verdana Village Center is an integral part of Verdana Homes, CII's successful first development and the primary market it shops and services. It will service the additional expansion for locators already established in Alabang Town Center, Festival Mall and SM Mall.

As one of the first commercial centers on Daang Hari, the new national road that will be completed this year, Verdana Village Center confirms the tremendous market potential of the area, servicing 17,500 households in Molino and surrounding Bacoor areas.

Meticulous planning

Verdana Village Center is set apart by its meticulous planning, a hallmark of CII's philosophy of innovative, community-building development. With lots preequipped with utilities, from water to electricity to cable television, it ensures the growth of a more graceful and contemporary experience for shopping, dining and recreation.

Long-term value maintenance is assured thanks to its supervision by Ayala Property management Corp., the company that manages Alabang Town Center, Ayala Center and Greenbelt.

The urbanization of southern Metro Manila is the wave of the future. With its integrated planning and design talents, CII will harness that wave in Verdana Village Center.

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FIRST CONCRETE POURING FOR FORBESWOOD HEIGHTS
The pouring of the concrete's first layer signals the start of construction of Forbeswood Heights, a six-tower luxury condominium development of property giant Megaworld Corp. and Bonifacio West Development Corp. Forbeswood Heights is the entry project within the five-hectare Forbes Town Center in Bonifacio Global City. At the concrete pouring rites are, from left, BWDC director Kirk U. Young, president Charlie Rufino and vice chair Jacques Dupasquier; Megaworld president Andrew Tan; 19-1 Realty director Macario Rufino; and Megaworld SVP Kingson Sian.

EGI launches 'first home' condos

EGI Homes Cavite Condominiums, the first project of noted condominium specialist E. Ganzon Inc. in Cavite province, and the first permanent or "first home" residential condominium in the province, was recently launched to the public at the project site.

The first home is in contrast to the "second home" which is a vacation or resort home.

Located immediately adjacent to the Cavite Export Processing Zone, the project is a community of 10 buildings with an elevator each near the Bacao II gate of Peza on the Bacao Diversion Road. Designed to develop close social and community interaction, it will have a grand entrance gate over a 12-meter road linking it to the Diversion Road, a central patio that can be used for parking, an elegant swimming pool, a clubhouse with function rooms, centralized water and sewer system and Meralco electric power availability.

The first building of the residential complex is about 50 percent completed and was already granted a License to Sell by the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board on Oct. 10 this year.

Model units were available for viewing during the project launch with Gov. Erineo Maliksi, Mayor Dencito Campana, Vice Mayor Luis Ferrer III and Cavite Peza Administrator Digna Torres along with provincial, municipal and Peza officials and guests. Also present were presidents of company-locators in the economic zone led by Cavite Export Zone Investors Association president Nobuo Fujii.

The units are designed with class and distinction: French-style window grills, panoramic window, provision for hot water bath, an engineered toilet and bath system, provision for telephone line and cable-readiness, individual electric and water meters, a refreshing atrium, laundry-drying area, storage areas and ceramic tiles flooring. There's a choice of two- or three-bedroom units.

Amazing is the price tag for typical units of 30.50 sq. m. each. With all the amenities and facilities available to unit owners enhancing privacy, security, convenience, ease of maintenance and a "lifestyle," the two-bedroom unit does not exceed the P1 million tag.

And, yes, one can purchase in installments through Pag-Ibig, bank financing or in-house financing (EGI).

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Future living requirements of execs on the move

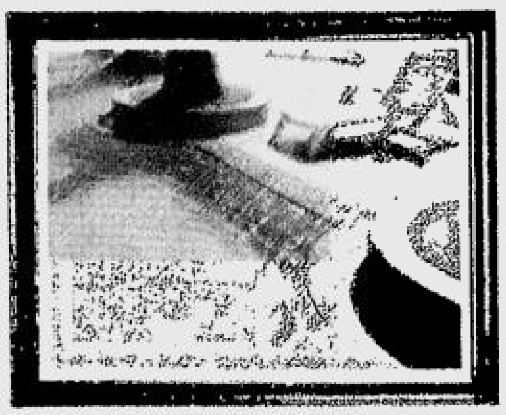
AN ECONOMY that is in flux, and fast-paced lifestyles have given rise to a new breed of Filipino executives. These go-getters no longer expect a single company to provide them with an entire career. Rather, such fast-trackers, whose interests and abilities span many areas, move through different corners of the corporate world looking for the best deals.

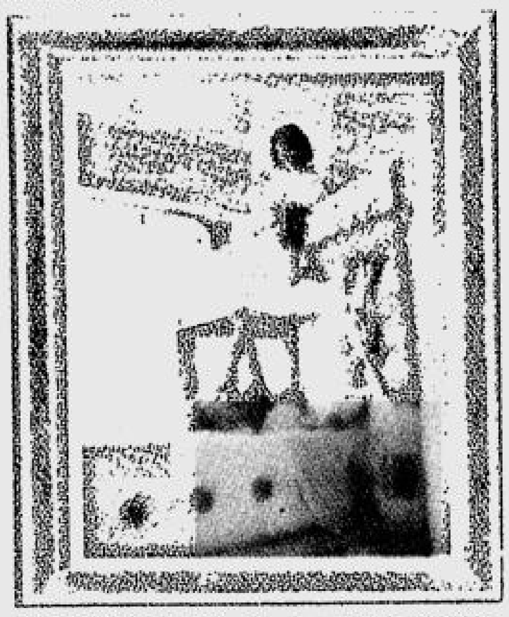
Indeed, people who stay put in one job all their working lives are now fast becoming a vanishing breed. The usual trend, after an average of five years on the job, is for most executives to move on to "greener pastures" or more promising work alternatives, especially when the path to advancement is blocked. Unfortunately, leading such a dynamic work life more often than not leads to a turbulent home life, primarily because they have to uproot themselves and their families to be near the work area.

Best site to reside

This is becoming aggravated by the "fracturing" of business centers in various far-flung spots around the perimeter of Metro Manila. Some executives are now solving the problem by choosing the most centralized geographical location to call home.

In the process, they remove a great amount of commuter life, enabling themselves to enjoy the best career options wherever these are in the metropolis, while being able to spend more time in their very own home with their families. The best site to reside, after all, is a locale equidistant to all major business points. For a growing number of people, this can only be Mandaluyong City, strategically located in the center of the "Golden Triangle of Makati, Manila and Quezon City.


INDOOR amenities include a swimming pool and a sundeck.


HIGH-RISE city living is also suitable for kids.

Great deal of potential

Currently hailed as the next "Tiger City" or "second most vibrant city economy," Mandaluyong City offers a great deal of potential for today's upwardly mobile market segments that choose to make a living and raise a family in the city.

A growing number of people consider as good investment a home in a city that is at the crossroads of development. As 58-year-old Mandaluyong City currently finds itself in the midst of brisk economic redevelopment, modern-day dwellers and professionals are taking notice and realizing just how their unique needs can best be answered.

A good stable and progressive community near the place of work and the good schools rank high among the reasons high-rise property investors cite for choosing to purchase a condo unit.

Working professionals see a gem in the heart of the city—at Pioneer Pointe, a new 28-story residential tower on Pioneer Street in Mandaluyong City.

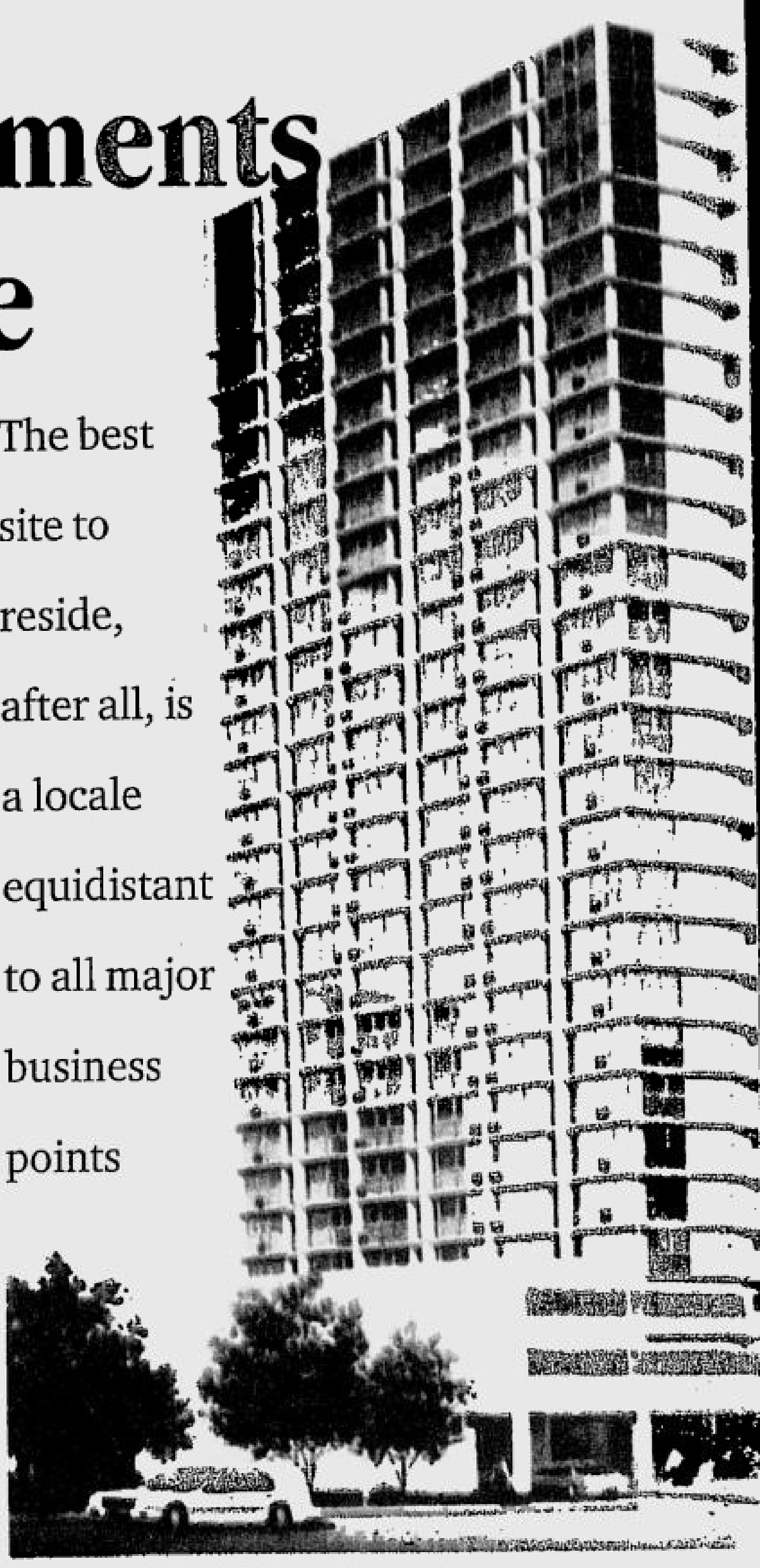
Ideal residential option

There is pride of ownership, a true sense of belonging, privacy and security, not to mention the elegant extras that come with high-rise city living, all bundled up in a secure development concept or affordable payment scheme, recognized by investors of Pioneer Pointe.

Best of all, Pioneer Pointe's highly convenient location at the center of numerous emerging satellite business districts (SBDs) has made it an ideal residential option for people who await exciting work opportunities.

High-rise city living

Pioneer Pointe fits in with the dynamic lifestyles and requirements of contemporary dwellers, including executives on the move. As


The best site to reside, after all, is a locale equidistant to all major business points

VACATION GARDEN HOMES

Ponderosa Leisure Farms breaks ground

PONDEROSA Leisure Farms, the second leisure farming development of property developer Land Pacific Corp., recently held its groundbreaking rites on the site.

In attendance were the family and friends of Landco Pacific Corp., Metro Pacific Corp. and of Doña Maria Luisa Perez-Rubio, president of Ponderosa Farms Inc.

Exclusive event

Dubbed "Through Scents and Senses," the exclusive, by-invitation-only event kicked off with opening remarks from Alfred Xerez-Burgos Jr., president and CEO of Landco Pacific and Perez-Rubio, welcoming friends to Ponderosa Leisure Farms' vacation garden homes in Silang, Cavite.

A Mass was officiated by Rev. Fr. Felix S. Ferrero of Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay before the lowering of the time capsule and the toasting ceremony at Alessandra's Field. A gourmet feast with live Spanish-Mexican music by Legato Strings and a tour of the garden were the highlights of the celebration.

Another new concept

Ponderosa Leisure Farms is another new concept in lifestyle and leisure, residential garden homes in Mexican-Spanish surroundings. It is where residents can grow a garden of flowers and vegetables, too, hassle-free, in a perfect location—sheltered from possible typhoons, in a ridge-like landscape that serves as a natural barrier to flood amid cool weather, night and day, and is just one hour away from Metro Manila.

"Ponderosa is the first development that combines a garden community with residential resort features," says Alfred Xerez-Burgos III, VP and group head of Leisure Farms. "It is the ultimate in country living in terms of location value, amenities and lifestyle activities."

TAKING a break after lowering the time capsule at Ponderosa Leisure Farms are, from left, Manuel Pangilinan, Alfred Xerez-Burgos III, Carlos Perez Rubio, Ma. Luisa Perez-Rubio, INQUIRER Chair Marixi Prieto and her husband, Alex Prieto, Gloria Tan Climaco and Francis Ceballos.

Special guests

Special guests were Manuel Pangilinan, chair of LPC and MPC board; Alfred Xerez-Burgos Jr.; Francis V. Ceballos, EVP and chief operating officer of LPC; Alfred Xerez-Burgos III; Doña Ma. Luisa Perez-Rubio; and Carlos Perez-Rubio, VP of Ponderosa Farms.

Also present were VIP guests Jose Ma. Lim, president of Metro Pacific Corp.; Jerry and Nieva Isla of Joaquin Cunanan & Co., and Pasong Langka barangay chair Noli Poblete.

Landco Pacific is the developer of Leisure Farms in Lemery, Batangas, the country's first residential hobby farming and agro-tourism development, which.held its groundbreaking in 2001.

Property dev't, updates on HLURB rules

APPROVAL of the subdivision and development plans by the governing agencies is one major step that must be hurdled by a land developer. It is quite an expensive learning experience to discover later that what was prepared do not conform with the standards prescribed by government rules and regulations.

To provide the needed learning and updates for upcoming and current developers, professionals and property owners, the Urban Institute of Real Estate will conduct a lecture on the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board's updated rules and regulations and property development at Max's Restaurant, Glorietta 2, Park Square Drive corner Theater Drive, Ayala Center, Makati City, on Nov. 11, 1:30 to 6 p.m.

Speakers

Lena Vergara, deputy head of technical services, HLURB-NCR and engineer Enrico S. Cruz, licensed real estate consultant who has more than three decades of working experience in engineering, construction, real estate development and education, will be the resource speakers.

Vergara will talk on the new guidelines on subdivision planning and development, which covers latest updates, revision and amendments on the HLURB rules and procedures and related issues on subdivision and condominium development in the light of the current economic situation.

Review

Also to be taken is the review of the current applicable rules and procedures of the HLURB with regard to development permits of subdivision and condominium projects, registration and license to sell requirements, transactions exempt from license to sell, policies on Socialized Housing Bonds, registration of real estate dealers as well as zoning and land use regulations.

For details, interested parties may call the Urban Institute of Real Estate at 681-0928 or e-mail urbanet@pacific.net.ph.

Seminar on ways to sell RP property to Fil-Ams

THE REAL Estate Brokers Association of the Philippines (Rebap) Makati will conduct a workshop-lecture course on the $27-billion market for the Philippine real estate industry on Nov. 7, from 3:30 to 8:30 p.m., at Max's Greenbelt 1, Makati.

The main speaker and facilitator is Ed. T. Pascual, a licensed California and Nevada real estate broker who has been selling Philippine property to the Filipino Americans since 1984.

The seminar will also dwell on the demographics of the market, the various financing schemes desired by Filipino-American investors as well as the many tax breaks granted by the US federal government to their citizens when they invest in countries like the Philippines.

Other topics to be discussed are those from Pascual's book, "How to Profit from the $27-billion Filipino-American Market," now on sale at Philippine and US major bookstores.

If you develop, own, appraise, lend, buy or sell Philippine property, you will find the seminar helpful. There will also be a business matching session where the attendees will be allowed to discuss their projects and services with Pascual and his US marketing associates for eventual marketing to the 3 million Filipino-Americans.

Active takes fresh approach to future growth

DON'T change it if you can't improve on it. A platitude that works brilliantly as a business philosophy for the new top management of the Active Group of Companies, whose architects, engineers, environmental planners as well as marketing and insurance specialists have been around for over 30 years.

Says architect Antonio "Toti" Turalba Jr., the company president who has practically taken over the reins of Active: "There will be changes. By fine tuning the basic things we've been doing through the years and more on opening possibilities that are not hampered by the past."

Integrated approach

What they've been doing, Turalba adds, "is the integrated approach—starting from design all the way to marketing. It's a synergy setup, everything working together as a whole, not as separate entities. This has made us more efficient in many ways. You can deliver services faster, you react to the client faster, and you can address problems immediately."

In its three decades of impressive Active-ness, the group has done economic and socialized housing projects as well as premium property developments. Its core business, however, is medium-cost subdivision projects for the country's socially powerful and politically influential middle class.

And in a highly volatile real estate business—especially hard hit by the oil crisis in the '70s, the political upheavals in the '80s and the Asian economic crisis in the late '90s—the group has always managed to keep its chin above water with a stunning insight into its market combined with an uncanny instinct for great timing.

Teamwork

So how will Turalba improve on this blend of diligence and luck? "With my own touch," he replies unswervingly. "As I move along, that's the time it would show—more professionalism in the way things are being done, more fine tuning in the systems of the company and greater teamwork."

And to reinforce this teamwork, he can count on siblings Antonella V. Turalba, a business administration and real estate development specialist who is now director and EVP of the company, as well as Anjeanette Turalba-Fuentebella, a licensed architect who is one of the principals of the group's professional design arm.

Says Toti: And as we move forward, we will get more creative. Meaning, breaking new grounds, introducing new concepts, as the company has done in the past. In some areas, some concepts were way ahead of its time and it's only now that they are being accepted and appreciated. The point is, no matter how original something looks to you, you can be sure it's been done before in one way or another. What matters is your own touch, the tweak you give to a concept or formula that will give greater benefit to your clients."

Expansion plans

He is thus very discreet about his future expansion plans. Mainly, he says, it will be "improved versions" of economic (meaning middle-income) and socialized (the politically-correct term for low-cost) housing.

"We have always strived to do more than just the expected things for socialized housing, like we provide concrete roads, underground drainage, small parks and open spaces." Even more quality amenities can be built for the economic and open market housing, as he believes that everyone deserves a better quality of life; meanwhile, he hopes prospective homeowners can access a better and easier financial assistance package from the government.

Economic housing for the middle-income market he envisions, with the development of more town-and-country type subdivisions in Metro Manila, more specifically in their property in Laguna, Batangas, Bulacan, Negros Occidental, Iloilo and Cebu.

What excites Toti Turalba is the company's move toward a more tourism-oriented project, which was kicked off by its sprawling and distinctive Mt. Malarayat Golf and Country Club and Residential Estates in Lipa, Batangas. Now almost completely done, Malarayat is "the model of what we'll be doing in our resort and other travel destinations."

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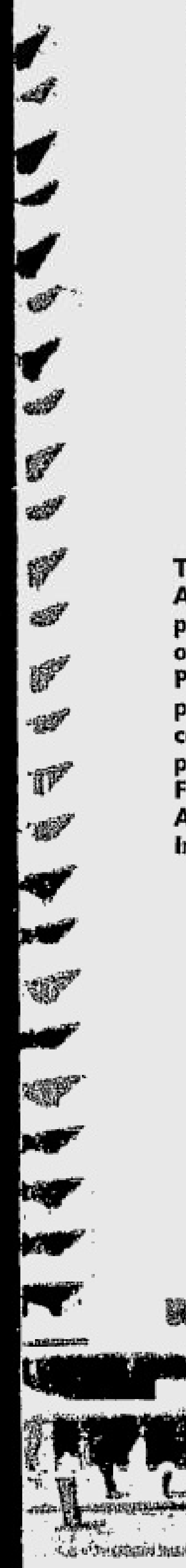
FAMILY-FRIENDLY spot in the heart of the city



THE ARCHITECT'S perspective of Pioneer Pointe, a prime condo project of Filinvest Alabang Inc.

these executives straddle the distance and work requirements for various companies in different cities in the course of a lifetime, investing in a safe, secure and family-friendly spot in the heart of the city emerges as a sensible choice.

Another advantage of choosing the high-rise city living offered by Pioneer Pointe is that the units are designed to have the same homey feel of a family house, and may even come with one's own spacious backyard or garden. A project of Filinvest Alabang Inc., Pioneer Pointe is reflective of Filinvest's philosophy of achieving high-quality design with careful attention to details.

Formal launch

The formal launch for the modern high-in-the-sky residence at Edsa Shangri-La, Mandaluyong City, was graced by Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council Chair Michael Defensor who keynoted the affair; National Housing Authority assistant general manager Joseph Peter Sison; Department of Trade and Industry's Board of Investments (BOI) Investments Promotions Group executive director Florina Vistal; and Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations (Creba) national president Florentino Dulalia Jr.

The condominium units are simple yet dignified in character, a realization of efficiency in architectural space planning.

Pioneer Pointe offers studio units as well as spacious two-level two-bedroom garden units, plus office spaces and parking areas. Indoor amenities include a swimming pool, children's play area, sun deck and function rooms, coupled with state-of-the-art security features like Closed Circuit TV (CCTV) monitoring of public areas.

Damage assessment by forensic engineering

BUILDING DREAMS

By Alexis A. Acacio

HOME damage can occur due to many factors and reasons. As a homeowner, it is important to know these types and their causes to ensure that you are safe in your own house.

5 major groups

These visible damages into homes, buildings and other infrastructure can be categorized into five major groups:

- **Functional damage.** This type of damage affects the serviceability or overall use of the building. It can be manifested as extensive cracks on walls and floors, jammed doors and windows, bulged floor tiles due to expanded soil, leaking roofs, etc. All of these affect the functional nature of the structure.

Insofar as overall structural stability is concerned, these are minor but they affect the usage of the structure. If you are operating a commercial mall and you have these small damages, you might have to close shop for a few days and expect the loss of revenue during the repair period.

- **Architectural damage.** Minor cracks on walls, faded paints and detached architectural elements can architecturally damage your structure. Slight defects on walls, floors and finishes generally are categorized as architectural damage.
- **Structural damage.** The most dangerous of all, structural damage can affect the stability and safety of the building or house. This includes heavily deflected beams, cracked columns, tilted walls and deformed foundations. The structure may collapse and endanger lives and property.
- **Hidden damage.** Also called latent damage, it refers to a hidden weakness in the structure that can lead to another defect. A hidden condition in the structure has no visible evidence of damage. In short, it is a failure waiting to happen.

Hidden damage can be assessed and discovered by reviewing the design plans to detect any possible design and construction flaws that were overlooked. Testing a specific part of the structure and inspecting a defective component can also do it.

- **Financial damage.** Financial damage refers to the monetary loss due to any of the said damages. As an example, a damaged shopping mall may have to be closed to give way to the repair of the damaged area. By this, revenue is lost since sales cannot be realized while the facility is being repaired.

The forensic engineer

In ancient times, the code of construction was simple. If a contractor builds a house and collapses, killing its owner, then the contractor will be killed. Today, there is a branch of engineering called forensic engineering that investigates the causes of such failures and identifies the persons responsible for these.

Forensic engineers or "experts" are used to assess and evaluate damages. Their opinions on these facts are also used in the court of law to guide and clarify doubts and questions that nontechnical professionals may have. The work of a forensic engineer involves:

1. *Assessment of damage.* The degree and extent of damage is assessed in this process and the structure is evaluated if it is still safe or not. A nonrepairable structure is recommended for demolition.
2. *Determining the cause of damage.* As the cause of damage is determined, so is the professional who is responsible for the damage. If multiple parties are involved, they tend to put the blame on somebody else.
3. *Recommending ways to repair the damage.* The forensic engineer, after assessing and evaluating the cause of damage, gives recommendations on how to remedy or repair. The cost of damage repair is also determined.

Traits

A forensic engineer should be an expert in his or her own field and should know and understand fully the subject matter under investigation or litigation. If the problem concerns the structural framing of a building, then the expert would be a knowledgeable and reputable structural engineer. If the problem concerns a sinking foundation, then the expert would be an experienced geotechnical engineer (a professional who designs foundation systems for structures).

An expert should have both design and construction experience since the problem either involves a design or construction defect. But the most important trait is the integrity and honesty of the expert. He or she must be impartial in revealing the cause of the problem and identifying the party at fault.

In the Philippines, should disputes arise due to design and construction deficiencies, engineers and architects along with legal advisers team up together to discuss the disputes. Should disputes go to court, the forensic engineers sometimes end up as expert witnesses.

Final Note. The said discussion serves as a guide for the homeowner in looking at the possible damages into his or her own home. The information in this article does not apply to every situation and is not a substitute for sound professional technical and legal advice. Each case is unique and requires a specific solution. If you find any damage in your home, it is necessary that you consult with the engineer of your choice.

(For comments and advice you may reach the author at aaacacio@pacific.net.ph.)

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ommunity offers alternative ifestyle for growing families

IFESTYLE that allows quality leisure e as well as access to major business dists is establishing Santarosa Estates 2 as a ving community favored by young extives, professionals and their families.

ess than an hour's drive on the average n Makati, Santarosa Estates 2 is a 10-tare residential community primarily ering house-and-lot packages with floor as ranging from 90 to 165 sq. m. Develd by Ayala Land subsidiary LPHI, Sansa Estates 2 is at the heart of the dynic Sta. Rosa community which hosts a d number of foreign-owned manufacng sites. These companies have in turn acted schools to the area like De La le, St. Scholastica's College, Don Bosco the Ateneo Graduate School.

antarosa Estates 2 is also near commer centers and is a short drive away from more established and self-contained la Alabang community developed by LPHI's parent company, Ayala Land Inc.

Idyllic ambience

In addition to these benefits, homeowners are beginning to appreciate Sta. Rosa's idyllic ambience, according to Jenylle Sorongon-Tupaz, Santarosa Estates 2 project development manager.

"Because Sta. Rosa is always a few degrees cooler and is certainly a lot quieter than Metro Manila, homeowners feel they have escaped the big city once they enter the village," she says.

Leisure facilities

By year-end, discloses Tupaz, Santarosa Estates 2's leisure facilities will have been completed, a development that will bolster the alternative lifestyle offered by this growing community. The village showcase will be a landscaped park close to 3,400 sq. m. in area. It will have a clubhouse, basketball court, swimming pool, jogging path and fitness trail.

Masterplanned by DQA Environmental Design, the park's centerpiece will be a swimming pool designed for family interaction. The pool will integrate two kiddie pools with varying depths, a lapping area and conversation nooks. DQA president Frank Borja explains that parents with younger families "seem to want to be more involved and hands-on in rearing their children these days." Thus, the pool in particular was conceptualized so that each member of the family could engage in an appropriate activity but still remain close to the other members.

Most novel innovation

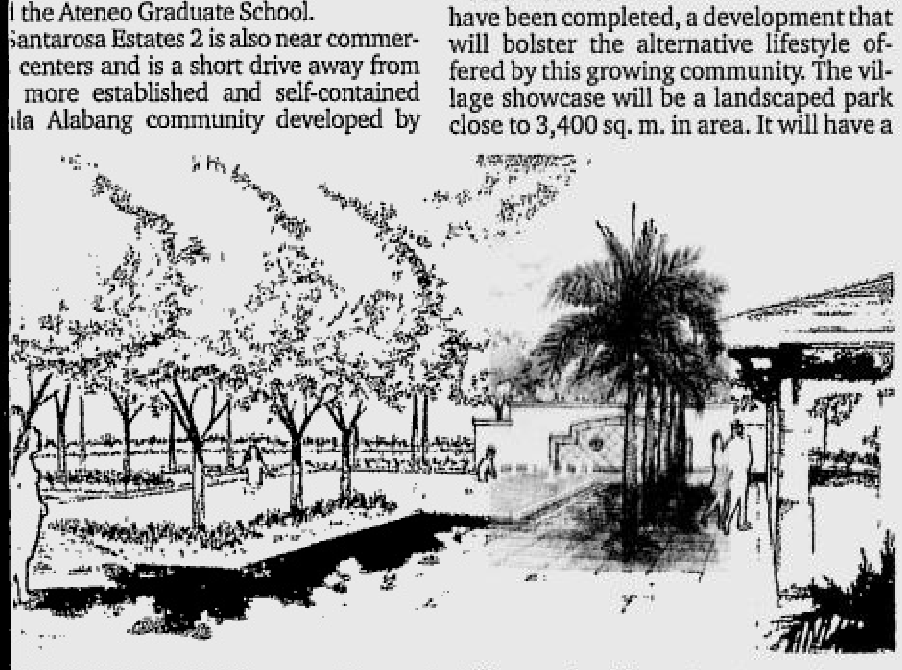
The pool area for toddlers, which has a water depth of no more than four feet, stands out as the most novel innovation. Envisioned as a place where very young children can engage in water play "like pouring water in and out of teacups," it also incorporates 12 mini water fountains that burst through the water line and rise about a foot.

In addition, the shallow area can also be used by adults for lounging on their backs while staying cool.

At night, the lighted fountains serve as an interesting backdrop for parties and other events.

A playground for children with a lot of grass to encourage active play and seating for parents and caregivers are incorporated in another park within the community.

Santarosa Estate's house-and-lot packages make use of a French building system that offers durability and strength and comes with a 15-year warranty on structural integrity. Homes make use of two-toned concrete roof tiles that reflect the Mediterranean theme of the community.



E CENTERPIECE of Santarosa Estates 2 will be a park with a swimming pool igned for family interaction.

GROUNDBREAKING RITES
Ambassador Felimon Cuevas, second from right, chair and president of Cuevas Group of Companies, leads the groundbreaking rites of Cuevasville Subdivision at Daang Hari, Bacoor, Cavite. Cuevasville Realty and Development Corp. is positioning its subdivision project at par with other big realty projects in the country today. Also shown are, from left, Rep. Tet Garcia, RGV Real Estate Inc. president Rodolfo Valencia, Bacoor Mayor Jessie Castillo and Amalgamated Motors Inc. manager Eraño Cuevas.

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unrise Hills benefits from Dasmariñas progress

ORDABLE housing developer Empire t Properties Inc. has added Sunrise is to a growing number of residential jects that have established the rapidly anizing municipality of Dasmariñas, vite, as a foremost "residential town" he Calabarzon.

unrise Hills is located on Malagasang d in Sabang, Dasmariñas, a short disce from the Aguinaldo Highway. It of two distinct types of residential units: iplex house in Phase 1 and a slightly ller but more affordable house in se 2. Among its amenities are a guardentrance, an overhead electrical distriion center, a deep well and elevated er tank, park and playground areas, a wet and dry market.

dustrial hubs

he Sunrise Hills community is deed to reap the benefits of its vantage ition in the progressive Dasmariñas a, which has attracted an increasing nber of home buyers because of the sence of several industrial parks. Apart from providing employment and livelihood opportunities to the townsfolk, the industrial parks have spurred the growth of Dasmariñas, making it one of the country's top industrial municipalities.

These include the First Cavite Industrial Estate on Governor's Drive, the Dasmariñas TechnoPark, Dasmariñas-Bagong Bayan NHA Industrial Estate and the First Cityland Heavy Industrial Center—all located near the Aguinaldo Highway. Governor's Drive is also home to other industrial zones such as the Gateway Business Park, Laguna International Industrial Park, Laguna TechnoPark and other large industrial establishments such as Reynolds Philippines, Monterey and Filipinas Daewoo Industries Corp.

Sunrise Hills residents are assured of convenient access to workplaces in Pasay, Makati or Alabang via the Aguinaldo Highway and Coastal Road. Moreover, the completion of the LRT-1 extension project from Baclaran to Bacoor and the planned second phase running all the way to Dasmariñas will cut travel time down to a few minutes.

Malls, banks, schools

Bringing also shopping convenience are a number of malls such as the nearby Robinsons-Dasmariñas, Walter Mart and the soon-to-rise SM-Dasmariñas, not to mention SM Bacoor and Makro-Imus.

The project also enjoys easy access to a host of banks, offices and other business establishments in the nearby commercial areas. Excellent medical care is available at the Dr. Jose P. Rizal National Medical Research Center, the St. Dominic Hospital and the De La Salle University Medical Center, the first ISO-certified hospital in the country.

Sunrise Hills homeowners will also benefit from the presence of satellite schools of the country's top universities including De La Salle, Philippine Women's University, Philippine Christian University and AMA Computer Center. This has earned Dasmariñas fame as a "university town" capable of meeting the learning needs of its residents at all levels.

Construction innovations highlighted in TechnoForum

THE PHILIPPINE Constructors Association has gathered local and foreign experts in the construction sector to conduct a series of seminars collectively known as TechnoForum, which will be held in conjunction with PhilConstruct 2003.

PhilConstruct is the country's most comprehensive and longest-running construction trade show. Organized by the PCA and sponsored by Cemex Marine, Boysen, Lafarge Cement, Bosch Power Tools, Davies Paints, Italit Pipes and the INQUIRER, it is slated at the World Trade Center on Nov. 13-16.

PhilConstruct theme

"TechnoForum is anchored on the PhilConstruct 2003 theme of 'Innovations, Solutions, Opportunities,'" said engineer Jorge A. Consunji, PCA first vice president and chair of PhilConstruct 2003.

"Innovations and solutions because over 5,000 global brands will be featured, and opportunities because the exhibitors will be able to interact with the more than 30,000 major industry players and visitors who are expected to attend the expo."

TechnoForum 2003 chair Liberito Espiritu said the seminars will be divided into the technology series, the equipment series, the IT series and the management series.

Management series

For the management series, the PCA and the Council of Engineering Consultants of the Philippines (Cecophil) will bring in experts from the Federation Internationale Des Ingenieurs-Conseils (Fidic) to discuss the four standard forms of contract.

The Fidic, an international group of consulting engineers, developed the four universally employed standard conditions of contract. These are known simply as the Red Book ("Conditions of Contract for Construction"), the Yellow Book ("Conditions of Contract for Plant and Design-Build"), the Silver Book ("Conditions of Contract for Engineer-Procure-Construct") and the Green Book (short form of contract).

Technology series

The second installment of the TechnoForum, the technology series, will feature speakers from the American Concrete Institute who will discuss high-strength concrete technology.

Architect Felino "Jun" Palafox of Palafox Associate will tackle global trends in urban planning and architecture. Leighton Contractors Philippines Inc. development and engineering manager Stuart Bowman will expound on the state-of-the-art technologies in highways construction, while Hiroo Jin of JFE Engineering Corp. will give a talk on special bridge designs.

Equipment series

Meanwhile, the Association of Carriers and Equipment Lessors Inc. takes over the equipment series, which will tackle risk management and basic rigging principles as well as technology solutions in equipment management.

This will be followed by German company Robert Bosch's presentation on the use of power tools.

IT series

The IT series will bring together Budget and Management Assistant Secretary Eduardo Obida, Estanislao Granado, Elizabeth Yap and Dianne Wacker for a discussion on new developments in government procurement, including Republic Act 9184 and the government e-procurement system.

Roly Socorro of JGC Philippines will also discuss 3D engineering technology and plant visualization.

Said PCA president Emilio Tumbucon: "PhilConstruct will also offer so many services as well as product and equipment lines that people will need to understand how to use them. That's why PhilConstruct won't be complete without the TechnoForum."

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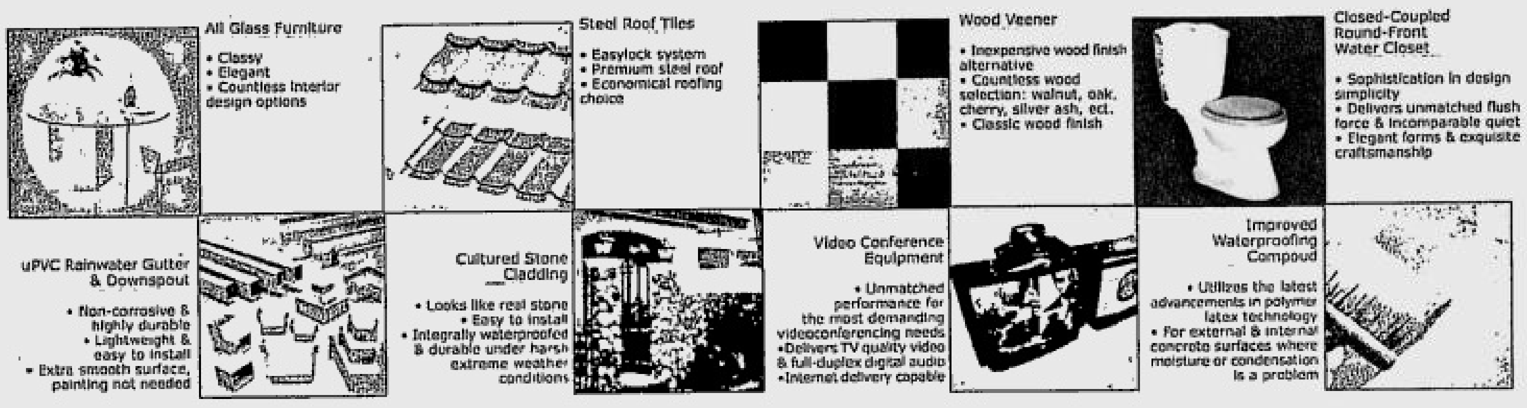

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MANAGEMENT SERIES

FIDIC's FOUR STANDARD FORMS OF CONTRACT

This is a 2-day International Seminar for the Asia-Pacific Region on FIDIC's Four (4) Standard Forms of Contract.

FIDIC (Federation Internationale Des Ingenieurs-Conseils) is the International Federation of Consulting Engineers with various National Associations of consulting engineers comprising its membership. The seminar is going to be handled by a knowledgeable speaker(s) who comes all the way from FIDIC Switzerland.

The seminar is intended for giving consulting engineers, contractors and employers a good introductory overview of the main FIDIC contracts. Having followed the seminar, otherwise knowledgeable and experienced participants should be able to prepare and use the contracts for normal works, and understand the basic issues to address in the context.

The FIDIC's Four New Standard Forms of Contract are as follows:
- THE RED BOOK: CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT FOR CONSTRUCTION (for Building & Engineering Works Designed by the Employer)
- THE YELLOW BOOK: CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT FOR PLANT & DESIGN-BUILD (for Electrical & Mechanical Plant and Engineering Works Designed by the Contractor)
- THE GREEN BOOK: SHORT FORM OF CONTRACT
- THE SILVER BOOK: CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT FOR EPC TURNKEY PROJECTS

The seminar will take the forms of a lecture of the different tracks and what are the drafting point for contract preparation taking into consideration on the employers' requirements. Practical example shall be presented to provide advise to participants not only on how to use them but likewise how to protect themselves using it.

Actual exercises shall also be executed during the two-day course so the participants may get a feel of the different standard forms of JBIC.

November 13 & 14, 2003/8AM to 5PM
Hyatt Regency Manila, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City
Registration Fee: Php15,000.00/person

Note: All delegates will receive copies of the four new contracts (First Edition) as part of the seminar documentation package.

TECHNOLOGY SERIES

- HIGH STRENGTH CONCRETE TECHNOLOGY
  By. American Concrete Institute (ACI) Philippine Chapter

With the growing popularity of high strength ready-mix concrete in the Philippines (currently defined as concrete whose specified strength is greater than 6000 psi), a material that promises to make the cost of high rise building construction more economical is becoming more readily available. However, many of the practices used in the normal strength concrete construction are inadequate when high strength concrete is specified. What makes concrete high strength? How does high strength lower construction costs? What changes in construction and testing methods are needed to properly use this product? What is the future of high strength concrete in the construction industry? Listen to the discussion and presentations of the industry experts on High Strength Concrete construction and its role in the future of the Philippine construction industry.

November 14, 2003/8AM to 5PM
Hyatt Regency Manila, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City
Registration Fee: Php2,500.00/person

- GLOBAL TRENDS & REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS IN URBAN PLANNING & ARCHITECTURE
  By Arch. Felino "Jun" Palafox, Jr., FUAP, PIEP Principal Architect - Urban Planner Palafox Associates

Highlights of discussions are Historical Urban Development, Urbanization and Directions of Urban Growth, Rethinking and Recreating the Urban Environment, Connecting Communities, Environment and Sustainable Development, The New Urbanism, Smart Growth for Cities, Walkable Communities, Transport-Oriented Development, Information Technology, The Home Office /SOHO (Small Office Home Office), Mixed-Use and Multi-Use Developments, Waterfront Development, Industrial/Business Parks, Transport and Land-Use, Going Back to Nature: Nature in the Metropolis, Ecotourism, The Principles of Amenity Accessibility, Development Options for a Region with High Growth Demand, Infill Development, Edge Cities, Agropolitan Approach to Development, Affordable Housing,Variety of Architectural Character, Commercial Centers/Shopping Malls,Master Planned Communities, Best Practices-Dubai and Other Global Cities, Urban Futures for our Towns and Cities.

November 14, 2003/8AM to 12NN
Hyatt Regency Manila, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City
Registration Fee: Php1,000.00/person

- A SEMINAR ON STEEL BRIDGES
  By Mr. Hiroo Jin, Sr. Technical Adviser of JFE Engineering Corp.

The speaker of this seminar will briefly introduce different types of bridges relative to the distance that a bridge must span. The brief introduction will be centered on standard pre engineered bridges, I section girders, arch bridges, cable stayed bridges and suspension bridges.

The speaker will then address the topic of bridge design, which will include subjects of design standards, loading conditions, material and others. It will be followed with an introduction of the advantages of steel bridges and this subject will be discussed from the points of construction schedule, quality control, safety, cost, maintenance and tidiness of the site.

It will also introduce new technologies in bridge construction such as the minimal I girder, open box girder, composite truss and others. The seminar will close with an introduction of the dream suspension bridge.

November 14, 2003/8AM to 12NN
Hyatt Regency Manila, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City
Registration Fee: Php1,000.00/person

- STATE OF THE ART TECHNOLOGIES IN PHILIPPINE HIGHWAYS CONSTRUCTION
  By Mr. Stuart Bowman,Manager, Development & Engineering, Leighton Contractors Philippines, Inc.

A presentation on the various technologies utilized by Leighton Contractors in the rehabilitation of the North Luzon Expressway, resulting in time and cost benefits to the client. These state -of-the-art technologies cover the use of recycled and other readily available materials to achieve high strength, high quality pavements at low costs. These likewise include the use of various equipment and controls, from the testing of existing pavements to the control of new overlay that will ensure adherence to International Standards in highway construction.

November 14, 2003/1PM to 5PM
Hyatt Regency Manila, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City
Registration Fee:Php1,000.00/person

EQUIPMENT SERIES

- RISK MANAGEMENT & BASIC RIGGING PRINCIPLES
  By. Crosby Group, Inc.of USA

The seminar which will be conducted by Crosby Groups, Inc. of USA will tackle Risk Management & Basic Rigging Principles Including topics on Rigging Triangles, Center of Gravity, Load Control, Proper Use of Rigging Equipment, Inspection of Hardware, Inspection of Wire Rope, Chain & Synthetic Sling, Understanding Terminology like Work Load Limit (WLL),Proof Test, Ultimate Strength & Design Factor. Crosby will issue a separate certificate to those attending the seminar

Target Participants: - Riggers / Crane Operators / Safety Officers / Equipment Engineers / Equipment Supervisors / Equipment Managers

November 13, 2003/1PM to 5PM
Seminar Room 1 World Trade Center Metro Manila, Pasay City
Registration Fee:Php1,000.00/person

- TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS IN EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT

A. Equipment Management Course
By: Makati Development Corporation

The course covers the various spectrum of an equipment Manager's Role in an organization. It will focus on management principles such as Selection, Acquisition, Administration, Maintenance and Disposal, and Replacement of Construction Equipment.

B. Computerized Preventive Maintenance Program
By: 1. Civic Merchandising, Inc.
2. Caltex (Philippines), Inc.
3. Monark Equipment Inc.
4. Morse Hydraulics System Inc.
5. Mancon-Berhard CBDC Joint Venture

The Program Provides a Wider Approach of Effective Preventive Maintenance of Construction Equipment Using the State of the Art Diagnostics Tool and Equipment Including Computerized PM Programs and Control.

C. The Management Program
By: Michelin Philippines, Inc
The Seminar which will focus on effective Tire Maintenance, Handling Storage, Record System and Monitoring as well as Correct Application & Usage.

D. Undercarriage Management Program
By: Maxima Equipment & Co., Inc.

The Program Provides a Wider Approach of Cost Reduction in Undercarriage Moving Parts of Bulldozers and Excavators Covering Wear Analysis using Undercarriage Measuring Tools, Do's and Dont's of Application and Usage.

E. Electronic Engine Maintenance Program
By: Gandiesel Philippines, Inc.

It deals with the New Technique in System Testing and Troubleshooting of Electronic Engine Using Computerized Programs and Diagnostics Tools.

Target Participants: Equipment Engineers / Equipment Supervisors / Equipment Superintendents / Equipment Manager / Equipment Owners.

November 14-15, 2003/8AM to 5PM
Seminar Room 1 World Trade Center Metro Manila, Pasay City
Registration Fee: Php3,250.00/person

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERIES

- 3D ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY & PLANT VISUALIZATION
  by. Mr. Roly Socorro, VP for Project Operations Division - JGC Philippines

In this forum, JGC Philippines can simulate creation of detailed engineering specifications from a concept. Typically expressed in 3 dimensional computer generated models. Parameter information (dimensions, material properties) are assigned to features for ease of modification and manufacturing process selection.

Interactive process for refining and modifying an initial design specification using analysis and optimization tools to meet evolving conditions (changing markets, production conditions) and produce a robust final design including a certifiable quality, flexible implementation and customer satisfaction.

FORUM TOPICS:
Overview 3D Engineering, Inter-Active Design, Plant, Integration Engineering Applications, Model Review and Design Assessment & Drawing Productions

November 14, 2003/8AM to 5PM
Hyatt Regency Manila, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City
Registration Fee: Php1,000.00/person

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT

- R.A. 9184 GENERAL PROVISION AND ITS IMPLEMENTING RULES & REGULATIONS (IRR) FOR CIVIL WORKS AS WELL AS GOVERNMENT ELECTRONIC PROCUREMENT SYSTEM

This seminar will allow you to have a closer interaction with the enactment of R A 9184 and the issuance of its IRR. Major changes in Government Procurement in civil works are expected to happen. The forum will touch on the general provision of the government procurement reform and its IRR.

The presentation shall be followed by a talk on the government electronic procurement system affecting goods and services. An open forum shall follow right after each topic.

Changes in Road Infrastructure Procurement With the introduction of the Road Users Tax, the DPWH has embark on a road reforms program. The presentation shall cover the past of the Road Board and its implications upon different parts, maintenance works by contract. After which, an interaction shall commence for an exchange of views.

This presentation will include a brief overview of entire DPWH reform efforts, with specific focus on the enhancements in the areas of Civil Works cost estimation, procurement and contract/project management and monitoring. This will include specifics on changes on the Civil Works Registry based on RA 9184 and the upcoming improvements and computerization of bidding and award. A brief demonstration of the software that will be provided free of charge to contractors for bid preparation will also be included. This session will allow time for input from the group to feedback, issues, concerns, etc., regarding the implementation of these reforms. Attend this seminar and you would tremendously benefit in understanding the changes and how it will impact upon your day to day operation.

Who should attend: Government Implementors, Government Contractors, Consultants & Suppliers.

November 15, 2003/8AM to 5PM
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Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

The mystery of metabolism

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

A READER asked me to explain further "The Dieter's Law" or the first law of thermodynamics.

This law states, "Energy. cannot be created or destroyed; it can only be transformed into another form of energy."

. According to the University of California's nutrition manual, the simplest way to remember the law is "If you eat it and don't burn it, you sit on it," which is a tactful way of saying if you eat too many cookies, they may end up on your behind if you don't burn them.

The reader wanted to know how the law applies to people who eat a lot and don't exercise, but don't seem to put on a pound. He said, "The output does not match input, but they don't gain weight. What happens to all the calories they eat? Where do those calories go?"

I'm sure people at the other end of the spectrum, those who watch what they eat and who exercise a lot but have a hard time losing weight, would also like to know how the law of thermodynamics applies to them.

For some people, losing or gaining weight is pretty straightforward. Eat more than you need and/or exercise less than you are used to, and you gain weight. Eat less than you need and/or exercise more than you are used to, and you lose weight.

These people are classic examples of the law of thermodynamics at work.

However, for other people, things are a little more complicated than that. Some people seem to make calories vanish into thin air. These are the people who can eat as much as they want and not gain weight. Other people only need to look at a piece of cake and, miraculously, the calories appear on their hips.

This does not mean that the bodies of these people are defying the law of thermodynamics. The calories these people are eating are either being burned or stored. Calories do not just appear out of nowhere or disappear into nowhere.

What it means is the body has an amazing ability to increase or decrease metabolism depending on the type of genes you have and how those genes respond to your environment.

There is still a lot that is mysterious about how the body manipulates its metabolic rate, and only future research will fully uncover the truth and perhaps develop a way to control, raise and lower metabolism to help people lose or gain weight more easily.

Theories

Here are some theories about human metabolism.

Even when you are lying motionless, your body continues to burn calories so your brain can think, your heart can pump, your lungs can breathe, your body can stay warm, you can digest your food and repair your cells.

The rate at which you burn these "housekeeping" calories is what is known as your basal metabolic rate or resting metabolism.

Dr. Eric Ravussin is a leading researcher in the field of metabolism. In one of his studies, he put people inside a "calorie-measuring" room that measured how many calories they consumed by analyzing their breath.

He measured their resting metabolism by making them lie down for 40 minutes without moving. He found that people with the same weight, height and body shape can burn different amounts of energy each day. He found ranges of 1,067 to 3,501 calories per day.

Ravussin believes one explanation for this large range of difference is nerves. He explains that since nerves control things like muscle tension, breathing and heart rate, people who are the nervous or "hyper" type probably have nerves that run at a higher level than everyone else's and, therefore, burn more calories even when they are forced to lie still.

Another explanation for the difference in metabolic rate is the body composition theory. Your body is divided into "fat mass" and "lean body mass" (also called "fat-free mass").

THE MYSTERY/ D4

> The body's ability to increase or decrease metabolism depends on the type of genes you have and how those genes respond to your environment

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NOVEMBER 04 TUESDAY

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THE CHIC lobby of Omni Hotel

THE FUN gang of journalists and travel agents at the lobby of Omni Saigon Hotel

Getting to know Miss Saigon's land

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** on **Kodak Max**

VIETNAM: A country filled with so many different sounds from some 1,000 years of history: "La Vie en Rose" of the French era from 1868 to 1953; the "Star Spangled Banner" that brought to mind so many lives lost and the triumph of **Ho Chi Minh** and the nation's independence in 1975. Other memorable super romantic sounds were the unforgettable movies, "Indochine," starring **Catherine Deneuve** and **Vincent Perez** and "The Lover," with **Tony Leung** and **Jane March**, both filmed in this exotic location, plus that acclaimed romantic stage musical, "Miss Saigon," naturellement!

Ho ·Chi Minh City was once called Saigon. After the country became independent, the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 1976 officially changed the name of the city.

The city is now booming like the Gold Rush towns. Around four million tourists from all over the world reportedly arrive every year, including hundreds of Americans, would you believe? And French, natch! Among this year's visitors was our fun-gang—journalists and travel agency owners and travel agents.

We arrived in a full-packed Philippine Airlines flight for a too-short, two-day look-see of Ho Chi Minh. Most members of the group breezed through immigrations, except *moi*. I had to wait for 10 minutes because the computer in the booth I chose broke down. Just my luck!

We then motored to the fab, super friendly Omni Saigon Hotel Vietnam that belongs to the world-famous Marco Polo chain. The cool hotel is perfectly located, just 10 minutes away from the airport and the convention center.

SMB gang

The lobby was packed with visitors and participants in a convention being held in the city, including a San Miguel beer gang based there.

After a few minutes in our fantastic Superior room, the hotel's super nice general manager, tall, witty Dutchman **Henk Meyknecht** treated us to an excellent seven-course yummy Cantonese meal, then we were off to explore the fascinating city which, after the SARS' scare (short-lived there), was humming again. "Omni is enjoying almost full occupancy," Meyknecht explained, "and the city is in full swing with tourists arriving by the droves."

Ah, Ho Chi Minh, another city that never sleeps where you will always find color and movement. School girls and boys in colorful uniforms rode bicycles. Most of the girls wore the traditional *ao dai* costume in white, its tunic fluttering in the breeze. Adults, on the other hand, rode motorcycles. Our guide told us there were over a million motorcycles in the country. A Japanese motor costs $1,500 while its Chinese counterpart around $750.

We visited some interesting buildings combining Vietnamese, Chinese and European architectural characteristics. They included the famous and magnificent (and not destroyed during the war, thank goodness) Notre Dame Cathedral in the heart of the city. It was built between 1877 and 1880 at a cost of 2.5 million French francs, at the time. It is a perfect place to visit and attend Mass on Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Beautiful landmark

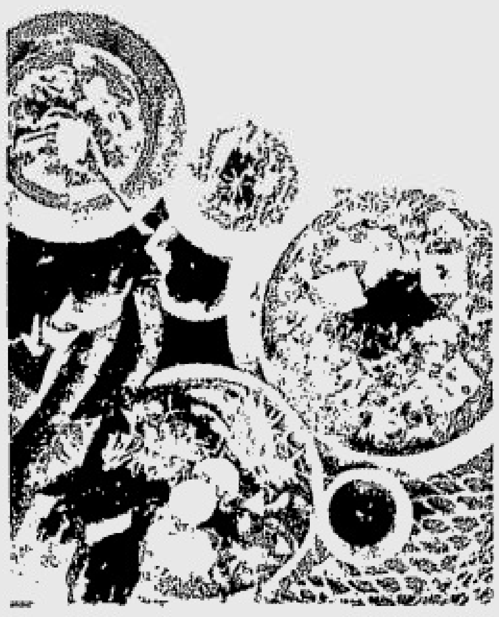
Right across the street is the beautiful Central Post Office. Its construction began in 1886 and was completed in 1890.

Our guardian angels in Ho Chi Minh were PAL's country manager and super secret weapon, tall southern lady **Eloisa "Ging" Ledesma**, who has been based in Saigon for the last five years; good-looking **Eugene Tamesis**, formerly of the Pen now Omni Saigon Hotel director for sales and marketing and, naturellement, Marco Polo Hotel Group's young, smart mega regional sales manager and another southern belle, **Undine Homena**. They helped, gave advice and accompanied all of us tirelessly throughout our stay.

We drove around the city and noticed the city's commercial zeal. A stroll along Dong Khoi Street took us past colonial-era landmarks and dozens of chic new boutiques.

THE BEAUTIFUL Art Deco interior of the city's Central Post Office

SOUVENIR shirt of Ho Chi Minh sold in streets and shops



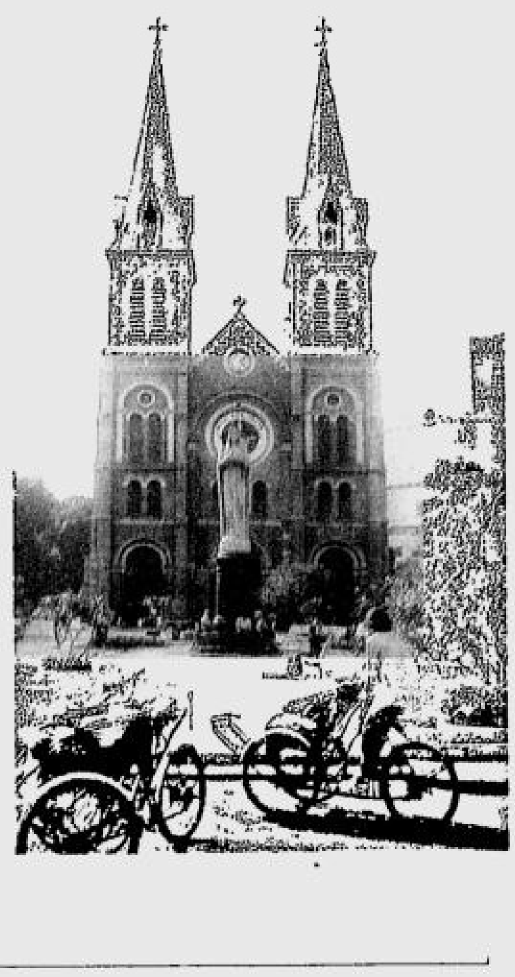
VIETNAMESE cooking is an exotic, colorful and flavorful gastronomic adventure.

DELICACIES and native fruits are enough reason to check out Ho Chi Minh's markets.

BASKET-CARRYING Vietnamese women used to sell yummy French baguettes in the streets of Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City).

VIETNAMESE schoolgirls wearing traditional white *ao dai* tunics

DUTCHMAN Henk Meyknecht, general manager of Omni Saigon Hotel



THE MAGNIFICENT Notre Dame Cathedral, built in 1877-1880

OUR guardian angels: Eugene Tamesis, formerly of the Pen and now Omni Hotel director for sales and marketing, with Undine Homena, Marco Polo Hotel Group regional sales manager

From there we did a quick stop at the must-go-to place, the legendary Ben Thanh Market. It's a huge covered market where you can find all kinds of clothes, fresh fruits, food, flowers, electronic devices—you name it, they have it. Wow! Faster than you could bat an eyelash, our gang of travelers went on a buying spree. With an exchange rate of 15,000 Dong to $1, imagine what you can get with $100. You're a billionaire overnight! And believe me, *palanggas*, that amount goes a long way. Everything is so cheap it's unbelievable. Hong Kong, Bangkok or Singapore don't come close. If you're in a shopping spree, it's the place for you. No wonder PAL's PR591 flights are usually full.

Gone berserk

Best sellers were the chic hand-embroidered evening bags at the give-away price of $2-5, depending on the size, natch! **Pepper Teehankee** and I discovered the stalls and before long, our darlings, **Ethel Timbol** of the Manila Bulletin; Undine Homena; world traveler **Nancy Sih** of the popular Uni-Orient Travel Inc. and Philippine Airlines production manager, nice **Gemma Saravillo**, went berserk buying the bags, as well as Vietnam's famous lacquered plates and paintings, wood carvings and antiques.

Ethel grabbed the give-away four panels of fish and wise men at $50 per set. The set was packed and delivered to our hotel. Needless to say, bargaining was still the name of the game. You can go as low as 60 to 70 percent of the price they first give you, then feel your way through what you think is the right price.

Next stop was the antique market at Le Cong Kieu District 1.

Pepper knew every nook and cranny of the street, having been to the city during the SARS scare. They have vintage watches including Rolex, Buddhist wooden and brass monk statues, carved wooden frames, plus carved wooden Foo-dogs, which *moi* collects.

At the center of District 1, the gals went on a walking tour exploring the shops and boutiques in the place.

Gorgeous soft silk blouses were sold for $5, reproduction of paintings at $10-$20 depending on the size. When we got back to the bus, which was waiting for us at the heart of the commercial district opposite a cool tree-filled park behind the opera house, vendors swarmed around us selling day-wear embroidered bags at $10 each. The gals got them for $5.

That night we had a great dinner hosted by the New World Hotel Saigon at their Dynasty Chinese Resto. We were entertained by our very own, Filipino **Faye Jaca Paras**, the marketing and sales director of the hotel. She gave us a tour of the place and told us that former US President **Bill Clinton** and his wife **Hillary** stayed there at one time and the whole hotel was occupied by their entourage.

EASY on your wallet. Authentic antiques and reproductions can be found at the Le Cong Kieu antique market district.

Let's talk about sex, baby

By Rowena C. Burgos

PARENTS play a critical role in their adolescent children's behavior, and nowhere is this role more important than when imparting information to kids that would help prevent pregnancy and disease.

It is in this light that the Institute for Social Studies and Action (Issa) has published "Kikay Kit: Kaama't Impormasyon sa Katwa't Kalusugan Nating Youth," a booklet on sexual and reproductive health concerns for young people written in Filipino.

The booklet is part of Issa's project with the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, which spearheads advocacy and information dissemination programs on sexual and reproductive health and rights issues.

Issa is a non-government organization that works for the empowerment of women and young people by providing accurate and relevant information specific to questions of sex and reproduction

It conducts public education, training and research, maintains a resource center, networks with other NGOs, government organizations, alliances and other groups, and publishes materials to help transform knowledge into action.

Basic information

"Kikay Kit" gives teens basic information on how the human reproductive system works, how to feel comfortable with their level of involvement in a relationship and the problems that might be caused by premature sexual activity.

The male and female reproductive systems are explained in labeled diagrams. The female menstrual cycle is also covered.

Among the illustrations are those that show a group of young girls talking about peer pressure, and what to do if a boyfriend wants to go farther than a girl is comfortable with.

A story of a teen couple's relationship from friendship to dating is used to explain the need for communication between the two parties about agreeing on the relationship's limits.

Also discussed are the responsibilities that come with pregnancy should unmarried couples choose to be sexually active.

There are also chapters on being lesbian or homosexual and what to do if one is sexually harassed.

The chapters have titles that impart a sense of sympathy, accessibility and understanding: Dalaga Ka Na, Hindi na Bata; Mga Pagbabago sa Adolescence; Kilalanin ang Katawan ng Dalaga at Binata; First Time; Ang Siklo ng Regla; Mga Sabi-Sabi Tungkol sa Pagreregla; Mga Problema sa Pagreregla; The Dating Game; This Girl's in Love With You, Mare; All the Way; Lagot, Positive; Mag-ingat sa Maling Akala, Maging Wais; Better Safe Than Sorry; Karahasang Sekswal; and A Whole New World.

Timely

The booklet is a timely response to fresh reports that 70 percent of all high school seniors engage in sexual intercourse before graduating, one in eight contracts a sexually transmitted disease (STD) each year, more than 80 percent of all STD cases occur among those under 29 and an estimated one in five adolescent girls has an STD and doesn't know it.

This is why "Kikay Kit" urges parents to take a more active role in their children's sexual well-being.

At least once a year, says the booklet, adolescents should be seen by a competent health care professional who specializes in adolescent health.

But if you are a parent, taking your child to a health care professional is not the end of the story.

Study after study proves that when parents talk to their kids about sexual issues, their kids listen.

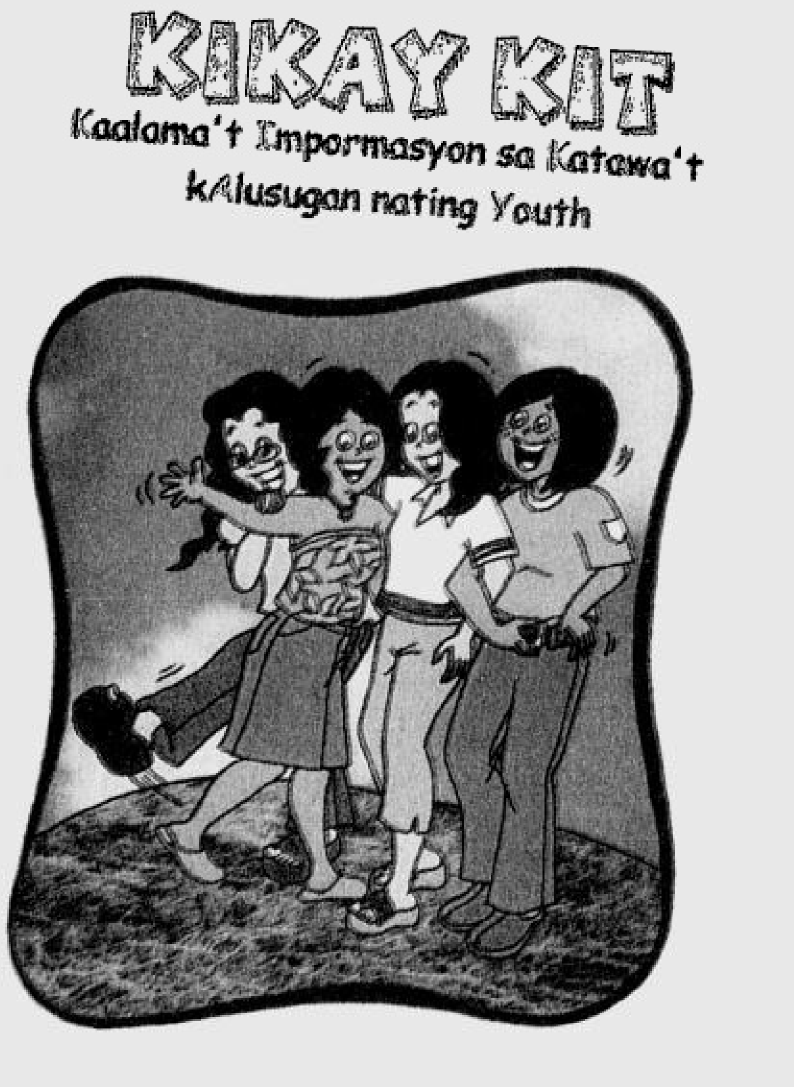
Talking about sex is not the same as condoning it. In fact, studies show that when parents talk about sex, children are more likely to talk about it themselves, to delay their first sexual experiences and to protect themselves against pregnancy and disease when they do have sex.

'Kikay Kit' is a useful booklet on sexual and reproductive health concerns written in Filipino for young people

This doesn't mean that the only discussion you can have with your child is about protection. Abstinence remains the best protection against both pregnancy and STDs, and that should be made very clear to young people.

If you're uncomfortable talking to your kids about sex, give them a copy of "Kikay Kit," or guide them to visit a web site specifically designed for adolescents like the Adolescent Wellness and Reproductive Education Foundation (www.awarefoundation.org).

Parenting an adolescent makes the stresses of infancy seem like a tropical vacation. But with strong communication, active listening and lots of love and respect (on both sides), you and your kids can make it through and remain healthy.


KIKAY KIT
Kaalama't Impormasyon sa Katawa't kAlusugan nating Youth

"Kikay Kit" is available at P35 each for 1-50 copies and at P30 each for 51 copies or more, excluding delivery cost. Call 9216170/4367017 or e-mail issa@pacific.net.ph.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph

All about predictions

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

MAJOR disasters or cataclysms are seen by many people long before these events happen.

Months before Mt. Pinatubo erupted, a number of Filipinos saw it coming either in dreams, visions or sudden thoughts. The same thing happened with the sinking of the Titanic, or the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York on Sept. 11, 2001

What is a prediction? How and why does it occur? What type of persons can predict the future?

We can define prediction as a statement of a future event or incident. The psychic ability involved here is called "precognition" which literally means "to know beforehand."

Some parapsychologists are of the opinion that precognition is a form of clairvoyance, only what is seen is a future event rather than the present. Still, others contend that other psychic powers are involved, namely telepathy and remote viewing.

Most predictions by ordinary people happen spontaneously and without any conscious thought or effort on their part. In fact, when they deliberately try to predict a future event, it turns out to be wrong.

Almost everybody has seen a future event at one time or another. It does not take a highly developed psychic ability for it to happen.

I have no special psychic talent or ability, but I have been able to predict accurately several future events without my thinking of them as predictions at all. Many of them I forget soon after saying them.

Only a few days ago, I was introduced to an Indian, who told me we had met before in an ABS-CBN television program called "Teysi ng Tahanan," where his mother and I were guests on the topic of reincarnation.

"When we were introduced," he recalled, "you told me I was married to a Filipina, which was not true. I was single at that time and was not going out with any Filipino woman. Four years later I met Lin, a Filipina, and I married her. That's why I can't forget you. I only told this to my wife last week when I heard you will be one of the speakers in this symposium, which is sponsored by my wife's company."

I vaguely recall having met this Indian man and his mother who guested with me in that TV program, but I don't remember at all having said he was married to a Filipina. I don't know why I said that, if I ever did.

This reminded me of several incidents in the past where I spontaneously blurted out remarks which turned out to be true.

For example, I vividly recall that in 1974, the first time the Miss Universe Pageant was held in the Philippines, I bumped into a well-known cardiologist in a restaurant on Roxas Boulevard.

In the middle of our conversation, he suddenly asked me, "Jimmy, guess who was my date last night?" Without as much as a thought, I immediately said, "Miss Japan."

Shocked, he shot back, "How did you know?"

"Why?" I asked, "who was with you last night?"

"I was with Miss Japan. But how did you know?"

Frankly, I didn't know what made me say that. What I remember is, when he asked me that question, Miss Japan entered my mind and I just blurted it out for no reason at all.

Several years after that, I met in a supermarket a former officemate whom I had not seen for more than 15 years. She smiled at me when she saw me and greeted me. But then, all of a sudden, again for no apparent reason, I told her, *"Bakit mukha kang Viernes Santo?"* (Why do you look so sad, like it's Good Friday?) "Did anybody die?"

Her face really changed when I said that. "Didn't you know?" she asked me.

"What?" I curiously asked.

"My son was one of the Ateneo students who died when the bus they were riding in fell into a ravine last month."

"No, I didn't know that!"

"I thought you knew, that's why you asked."

"No, not at all, I'm so sorry to hear that."

How I saw in her smiling face the tragedy that befell her family is beyond me.

A kind of knowing

Those two incidents cannot strictly be called predictions, because they pertain to past events. They belong technically to retrocognition, but nevertheless they illustrate a kind of knowing, whether past, present or future, that did not involve reasoning or external sensory data.

So let me give some examples of real predictions I made spontaneously which I did not know were correct at the time I made them.

Sometime in 1995-1996, two men I did not know came out of Pancake House Restaurant in Greenbelt, Makati while I was passing by. Upon seeing me, one of them said, "Hello Jimmy! Remember me?"

Frankly, I told him, I didn't.

"Well, I can't forget you," he said, "because you said one month before the event that if Ninoy Aquino came back to the Philippines, he would be assassinated."

"I said that?"

"Yes, you did," he said. "There were six of us in the restaurant, and they all heard what you said. That's why when Ninoy was in fact assassinated (on Aug. 21, 1983), I remembered your statement."

Here's another example. In the '90s also, my daughter who lives in Los Angeles told me there was this Japanese-American who was courting her. He said he was single. But my daughter was suspicious of him. She asked me what I thought of him. She faxed me a picture of the guy, and as soon as I received the fax she called up and asked what I thought.

I told her, "This man is married and he has five children. Not only that. He didn't even give you his real name."

When my daughter investigated the man and confronted him, he confessed he was indeed married. He had four children and his wife was pregnant. That made five children. She also found out that, indeed, he gave her a false name.

I did not know how accurate I was until weeks later when my daughter confirmed it to me. I couldn't believe my ears! I was only joking when I said those things about the guy.

About five years ago, I told Ramon Tan, who established the Carica Herbal Co., that Carica will be the United Laboratory of herbal products in the Philippines.

At that time, Carica only had two products. Four years later, it has more than 70 products and still counting.

Why do predictions happen? Or, to put it another way—how come we can see the future? Can anybody do this?

The answer is, yes, anybody can see the future. It does not take very great psychic ability to do this.

Most of the time this happens spontaneously, like in my case. If you ask me what will happen to you in the future and I have to think about it, I can't do it. My answer will always turn out to be wrong.

But when I spontaneously say it without thinking, it is very accurate. Why?

Because spontaneous reactions are products of the subconscious mind, which is related to the right, intuitive hemisphere of the brain. When we try to think or reason out things, the left, logical and analytical portion of the brain is involved.

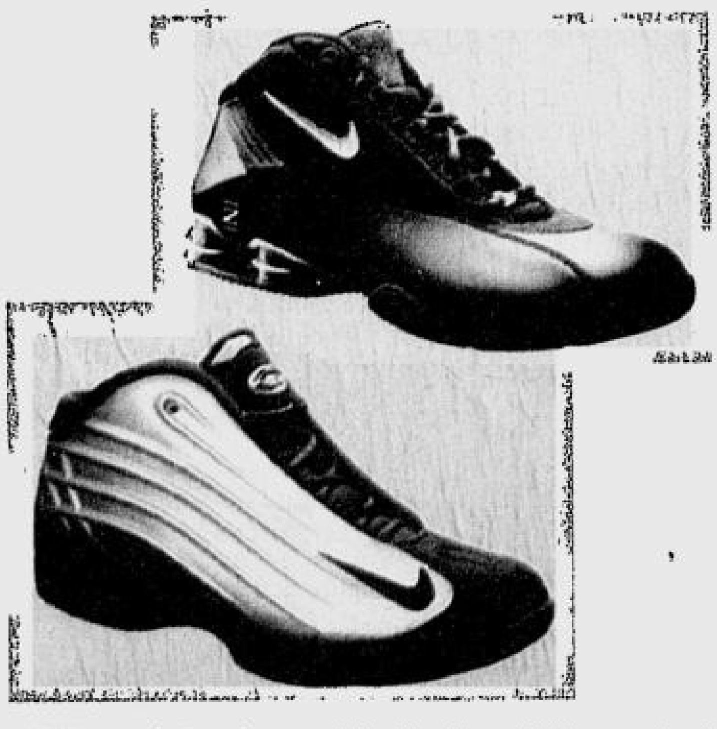
The left side of the brain requires sensory data or facts before it can make correct conclusions. Without external sensory data, the left brain can't make accurate decisions or conclusions.

We are all connected to all levels of creation and to everybody else through our subconscious mind. And our subconscious is the repository of all knowledge, whether past, present or future.

That's why spontaneous predictions, those made without thinking, are often correct. They are products of intuition, which is a higher form of knowing, unhampered by the intellect or the rational left brain. Intuition is an ability or faculty possessed by everybody.

Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City. Call 8107245 or 8926806. E-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Visit http://j.licauco.tripod.com. Listen to my dzMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8pm.

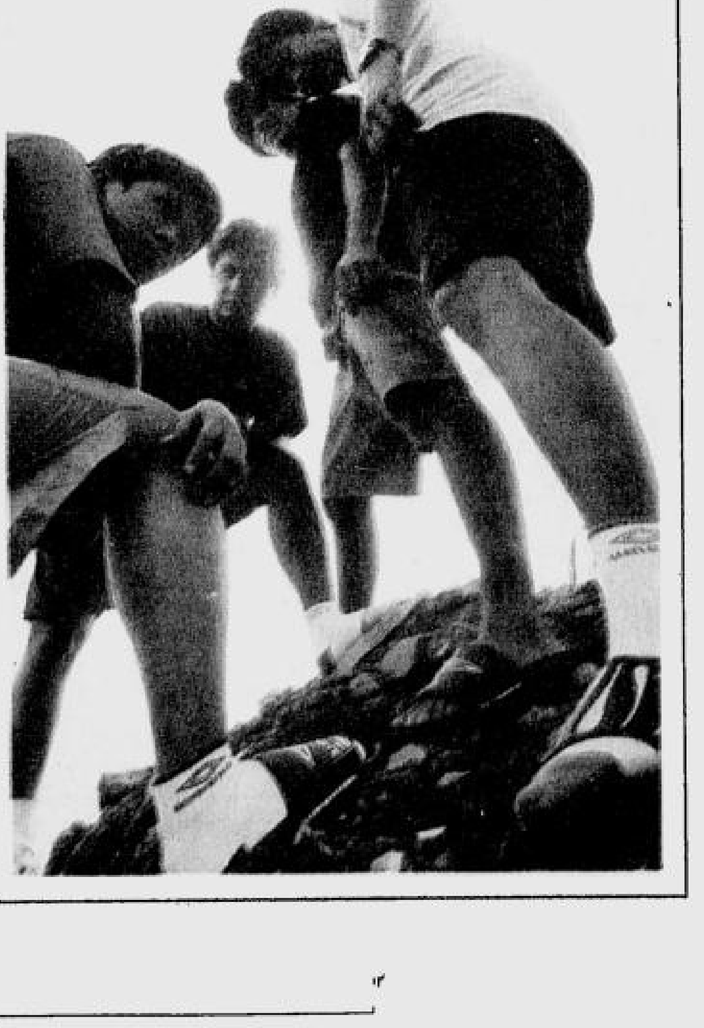
OAKLEY showcases items such as timepieces, apparel, footwear and accessories. These are available at Rustan's (Makati, Alabang Town Center and Shangri-La Plaza), G-Force Podium and Rockwell), T102 (Greenbelt 3), Royal Sporting House and Olympic Village.



NIKE Freestyle Gear features Nike Shox Status TB (upper photo) which gives players the trampoline effect; Nike Air Podposite III, a lightweight shoe (lower photo); Nike Sphere Dry Sleeveless Top which provides maximum coolness and comfort; Nike Dri-Fit 28 Shorts which has moisture-wicking technology; and Nike Freestyle Basketball with a synthetic cover. Available at Nike Park (Glorietta, Sta. Lucia, Robinsons Galleria, SM Manila, Festival Supermall, SM Southmall, Robinsons Ermita, Ayala Cebu, Greenbelt 3).

STYLISH AND COMFORTABLE FITNESS APPAREL

Umbro features football apparel, footwear and equipment, sports shirts, training shorts, and socks all set in a backpack or gym bag, caps and jackets. These are available in Royal Sporting House outlets in Ayala Center Cebu, Festival Mall, Glorietta 4, Ali Mall, Isetann-Recto, Robinsons Place Ermita, Sta. Rosa and Pampanga, Shangri-La Plaza, The Shoe Shop in Rockwell, Why Pay More? Mandaluyong and Pampanga.



Q&A on transforming and revitalizing your life

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

"He who knows others is wise. He who knows himself is enlightened."—Tao Te Ching

WE seek the answers to many questions about health and wellness. Here are some of them.

How can I embark on a light-cuisine eating plan? Where do I start?

First of all, clean up your refrigerator of all high-fat food. Replace regular mayonnaise with lite, low-fat mayo or mayo substitutes from soy (available at health food stores).

Regular butter is fine (if you are disciplined enough to eat in moderation. If not, try a canola-based butter substitute). Replace as well regular ice cream with no-fat, no-sugar ice cream.

Do away with all chocolates and pastries and substitute with raisins, prunes, dates and fresh fruits.

Throw out or give away all canned goods with high fat, sodium, sugar and preservatives.

Enroll in light cooking classes, too, such as the Institute of Kitchen Culinary Education run by Melanie Cruz and Ana Park, principal instructors from Ecoledes Roches (Switzerland) and Pria Chiongbian Solon.

The trendy studio offers Lite Cuisine, Cooking Basics, Asian Cooking (Malaysian, Singaporean, Indonesian), Haute Cuisine, Sushi-Making, French Basic and a Cooks and Maids training course.

Their kitchen is so organized, you may even ask them to redesign or reorganize your own at home! Absolutely no cooking skills are required to enroll. Best of all, there's even a class for children. Call them at 7710082.

Can you share with us a regimen that can revitalize our health?

There are many regimens I can share with you, but two are foremost in my mind.

> Flush all your pills down the toilet and declare, 'Liberation, not addiction!'

Livertonic regimen. The liver is the body's biggest organ and also the biggest organ for detoxification. Abusing it with excessive intake of alcohol, sweets and fatty food can damage it over time.

Make it a habit to have a hot cup of lemon juice (no sugar) every day. One squeeze in a cup ought to do the trick first thing in the morning. Don't worry, it won't give you an acidic tummy at all, since lemon is alkaline, and this helps to balance the pH level in your system. And it will definitely cleanse your liver.

Or try eating a fresh garlic clove with food (not alone). Garlic is a natural antibiotic and has antibacterial properties. Two garlic oil tablets will do.

Eat a bunch of black grapes daily. Or take a glass of freshly blended carrot juice (three pieces) and fresh beet root (two pieces). This will surely turbo-charge you!

Kidney tonic. Sip a hot cup of hot water mixed with 1 tsp of fresh honey. Cranberry juice is best. Mix the concentrate, not the juice from concentrate, in a glass of cool water.

Eat half of a medium-sized melon (alone, and not to be mixed with other fruits or food) half an hour before or after a meal.

Take 8-10 glasses of clean water a day.

What's the fastest and safest way to lose weight?

It's simple, really. Eat less of everything. When all else fails, do not eat, period. Sometimes, fasting can be good for you.

Or else, cut down on your carbohydrates, especially at night. Follow the half-rule—eat only half of your usual carbo intake.

Complement your low-calorie diet with daily 30-minute brisk walking. When you are hungry, eat something healthy like fresh or dried fruits, nuts, a low-fat granola bar, vegetable sticks, etc.

How can I adopt a more positive attitude in life? Is there a happy pill I can take?

Pills are never the answer to attaining happiness. While it is easy to pop a pill to dull your senses from the stresses of life, you are only making things worse. Running away from your problems is not the answer. Try this formula:

- Write down your problems in a journal. This is the journal of your transformation. In it, put down the ideal situations you can control. Don't write down as goals those that involve things you cannot control.

Work only on yourself. Begin with a mind and body regimen such as exercise and dance classes, spa treatments and meditation and prayer.

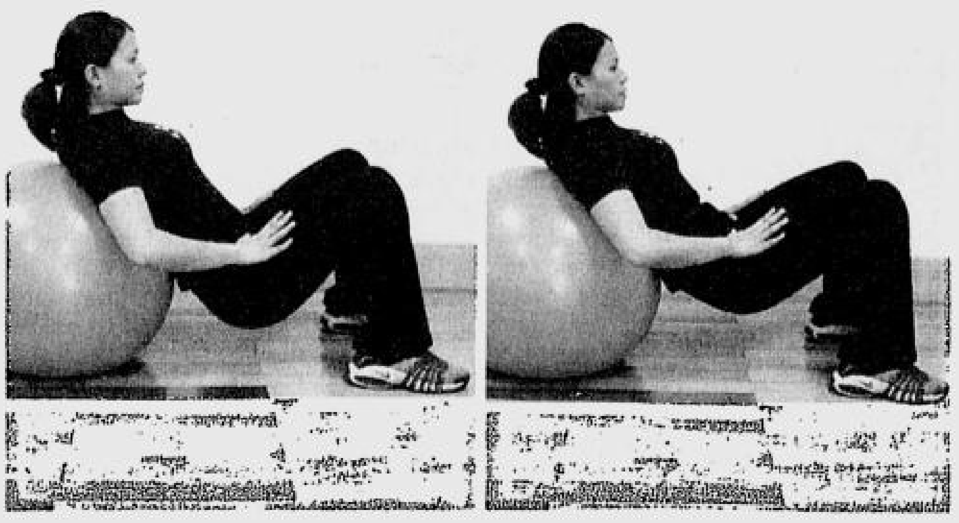
- Flush all your pills down the toilet. Then declare "Liberation, not addiction!" If you are an alcoholic, do likewise for your liquor bottles.
- Get active in volunteer work for the community.
- Affirm yourself by saying "My life is in my hands. And it will change for the better beginning today."

Why "love and light"?

I end my column this way for a reason. What I write here, in essence, is for healing. When I wish you love and light, I am sending you the most powerful force on earth—love, and through it, the light that can only uplift and transform you.

So here goes once again: Love and light!

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK



Incline pelvic tilt on stability ball

STRENGTHENS abdominal muscles and stretches buttocks and lower back.

Equipment:

Stability ball. As a substitute, you can do this exercise on the side of a sturdy bed.

Exercise technique:

1. Start by sitting on the ball with your legs apart.
2. Slowly lower yourself into the incline squat position by moving your feet forward and simultaneously leaning backward until the ball rolls behind your lower back.
3. Tilt your pelvis by contracting your abdominal muscles and pulling your hipbones upward toward the bottom of your ribcage.
4. Release the pelvis to starting position.
5. Do the desired number of repetitions.

Performance tips:

1. Exhale as you tilt the pelvis; inhale on the return to starting position.
2. Focus on using abdominal muscles to tilt the pelvis. Do not allow your buttocks to contract.

Repetitions:

You have two options for doing this exercise:

a. Hold the tilt for 10 seconds (do not hold your breath; continue to breathe as you hold the position). Do three to five repetitions.

b. Tilt and release for 10 repetitions.

The mystery of metabolism

From page D1

Lean mass is everything in your body that is not fat—muscle, bones, blood, organs, skin, hair, teeth, etc.

Lean mass is highly metabolic, meaning it requires many calories to maintain itself. Your internal organs like your brain, kidneys and liver are working nonstop and need fuel to keep going.

Muscles, including the heart, are also "calorie-hungry." People with a higher lean body mass or more muscle mass will have a faster metabolic rate.

Researchers at Tufts University in Boston have found a significant similarity in lean body mass, especially muscle, in members of the same families, implying there is a genetic component involved.

Ravussin also discovered that the tendency to have a slow or fast metabolism runs in families. Members of the same family tended to have the same metabolic rate.

Another metabolism expert, Dr. Claude Bouchard, confirms that weight gain appears to be influenced by genetic factors.

In his study, 12 pairs of lean young male twins were fed 1,000 extra calories for 100 days. Theoretically, they should have all gained the same amount of weight—approximately 29 pounds since it takes 3,500 extra calories to make one pound of fat.

Instead, each twin pair gained almost exactly the same weight in the same place (upper bodies, abdomen, legs, etc.), but there was a 9 ½- 29-pound difference between the 12 pairs.

Another explanation people burn calories differently is called the "fidget factor." Fidgeting is spontaneous physical activity or movement made without thinking. Examples of fidgeting are twirling your hair as you talk on the phone or jiggling your leg as you work at your desk.

In his calorie-measuring room experiment, Ravussin installed motion detectors to monitor how much movement the study participants made.

He discovered there is a big difference in the way people perform an everyday activity like watching TV. Some people sat as still as statues without moving a muscle. Others couldn't stop from changing positions every so often. Others kept getting up and moving around the room.

Ravussin calculated that fidgeting alone could burn anywhere from 300-800 calories a day. He found that the tendency to fidget or to be restless also ran in families.

In another experiment at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, researchers James Levine and Norman Eberhardt found that people who fidget while seated burn 40-60 more calories compared to people who sit motionless. Fidgeters burn 70-100 calories more per hour when they stand compared to laid-back people who stand still.

To find out how much of a role fidgeting plays in weight gain, Levine and his team fed 16 normal-weight sedentary men and women an extra 1,000 calories a day for two months. The participants gained between 2-16 pounds. The ones who gained the least were the ones who did the most fidgeting.

The last explanation for calories that just seem to evaporate is called "facultative thermogenesis" or heat production not related to resting metabolic rate.

It seems that some people are "efficient" (from a survival standpoint) calorie burners and store most excess calories as fat or fuel for the future. Others are "inefficient" calorie burners and "waste" the excess calories as body heat.

No one can yet fully explain the mechanism behind this. Some think it is related to the "brown fat theory." Brown fat is a special kind of fat that helps regulate body temperature. How much brown fat you have depends again on your genes.

Judith Wurtman of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology found that the more obese the person, the less active the brown fat cells were. However, she also noted that exercise increases brown fat activity.

A related theory is heat is always escaping from the core of your body through your skin out to the environment. People who are tall, lean and lanky have more skin surface area than people who are short and stocky and, thus, burn more calories, because more heat is escaping through their skin.

Difficult

So the law of thermodynamics applies to everyone. Some people are just better calorie burners than others.

It's difficult to change your basal metabolic rate, but there are some things that you can do and some things that you should avoid to make the most of your unique metabolism to help you lose weight.

Your body conserves energy by lowering your metabolism when it has not eaten for quite some time. So skipping breakfast, skipping meals and going on starvation diets are counter-productive to weight loss.

Not only do you keep your body in a prolonged lowered metabolic state, the tendency is to eventually give in and binge.

Studies show that severe dieting and regular meal skipping will result in some muscle loss, as the body "cannibalizes" muscle fibers for additional energy. The less muscle you have, the lower your metabolism.

The good news is, metabolism is not permanently lowered. It eventually bounces back when the dieter goes back to more normal eating patterns.

The bad news is, it takes quite a while for muscle mass to return to normal, and by that time, most dieters of very low-calorie diets end up putting on more weight than they started with.

This is because the body "overresponds" to the previous famine-like state by increasing fat-storing enzymes and other metabolic mechanisms to store as much fat as possible. And as stated, food deprivation also leads to increased appetite and big-time bingeing.

Lifting weights or some other type of resistance exercise like rubber bands, yoga, aqua exercise or Pilates with machines is a good idea to build more muscle mass to rev up your natural metabolic rate.

Resistance or strength exercise is even more important as people age, because muscles atrophy from disuse the older one gets.

Loss of muscle mass is one reason middle-aged people find themselves gaining weight despite eating the same amount they used to while they were young.

Lastly, someone with a slower metabolism will benefit greatly from trying to be as physically active as possible throughout the day to burn calories instead of storing them.

You may not be a natural-born fidgeter, but you can burn calories as if you were one by following the advice of Frank Butterfield of the American Council of Exercise: "Sitting up is better than lying down, standing is better than sitting up, and walking is better than standing."

For past articles and exercises, go to www.tinajuanfitness.info; for suggestions for future columns, e-mail me at fitness@attglobal.net.

Take Charge Doc!
Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.

MEDICard

Looking to learn more about your benefits under your MEDICard coverage? Do you want to be clear on the procedures, which allow you to avail of MEDICard's services? Get your information straight from MEDICard's Medical Director, DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA.

FAQs (frequently asked questions)

If I need medical attention when the coordinator's office is closed, can I get services from a non-affiliated doctor and later file reimbursement of my expenses from MEDICard?

No, not unless your condition is considered to be emergency in nature. In which case, you are advised to go directly to the emergency room for immediate treatment. The ER staff will notify the medical coordinator of your admission. Otherwise, you may opt to go to accredited mall-based clinics which usually operate on extended hours and are generally open even on holidays.

Meet your MEDICard Team

Dr. Ma. Ana C. Pangan was conferred Doctor of Medicine at the University of Santo Tomas. Thereafter, she took residency training for a specialization in Obstetrics and Gynecology at St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City where she now renders care to MEDICard members. Dr. Pangan joined the HMO in 1998. Members may visit her clinic at the Medical Arts Bldg., Room 346, from Mondays to Thursdays, 1 to 4 PM, Fridays, from 10 AM to 3 PM and on Saturdays from 1 to 5 in the afternoon.

Pediatrician **Dr. Rosa Maria H. Nancho** joined MEDICard in year 2000. "Tita Doc", as her patients are fond to call her, addresses the healthcare needs of MEDICard members at Manila Doctors Hospital. Dr. Nancho, who also subspecializes in Adolescent Medicine, has been in the practice of her profession for more than 21 years now. For consultations, visit her clinic at Room 704, from Mondays to Fridays except Thursdays, 10 AM to 12:30 PM and on Saturdays from 11 AM to 2 PM.

At the Dipolog Medical Center in Mibang, Sta. Filomena, Dipolog City, members may seek the services of **Dr. Mario Borlasa Mopon**. Dr. Mopon, a MEDICard provider since 1997, finished Medicine at the Uy-Gullas College in 1986. He also specializes in Family Medicine and has had more than 15 years of clinical experience. Members may visit him for their needed consultations from Mondays to Saturdays, 9 AM to 12 noon and then again from 3 PM to 6 in the evening.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

For inquiries on individual or family membership, dial 818-2161. For group or corporate membership, dial 812-8360, 817-5136 or 817-4985 and look for a membership consultant. For Cebu Sales Office call (032) 253-5031; For Davao Sales Office call (082) 224-6931/305-3386.

TEXT MEDICard for your queries: 0917-7518365 (Globe) or 0919-2476240 (Smart). Please don't forget to include your complete name and landline number where MEDICard could reach you. Log on to www.medicardphils.com.

MEDICard is the first HMO in the Philippines and the whole Asia Pacific Region to be ISO CERTIFIED

Davide gave Senate JDF records in March last year

Story below, Col. 1

Don't call 'em Brat Pack

SAYANG WALA NG FUNGUS FACE, ERAPTION, LAME DUCK AT DANCING QUEEN!

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE SO-CALLED "Brat Pack" in the House of Representatives that initiated the impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. has found

DON'T/A10

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Conjoined RP twins suffer slight infection

WHITE PLAINS, New York—A slight infection forced the removal of two tissue expanders that had been placed beneath the scalp of conjoined twins from the Philippines, surgeons at their Bronx hospital said.

The removal of the tissue expanders, performed in a 45-minute operation on Monday, is temporary and "will not im-

CONJOINED/A10

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Wednesday, November 5, 2003 ★★★ 68 pages / 7 sections / vol. 18 / no. 330 P15 website: www.inq7.net

Legal eagles clash at SC hearing today

GMA dines with JDV, Davide on covenant

**By Juliet Labog-Javeilana
Carlito Pablo
and Michael Lim Ubac**

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo had dinner Sunday in Malacañang with Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and Speaker Jose de Venecia, during which she showed them a draft tripartite covenant that she believes will end the impeachment crisis.

This was disclosed yesterday by the President's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye, who said the hour-long dinner was spent discussing ways of resolving the crisis. Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo was also present, he said.

Bunye said the covenant was not signed during the dinner because the Speaker could not yet commit the House. He said De Venecia's signature would bind the entire House, including the Nationalist People's Coalition lawmakers who initiated the impeachment complaint, to the covenant.

However, Bunye said, the covenant "appeared acceptable" to the Chief Justice.

Asked to comment, Supreme Court spokesperson Ismael Khan told the INQUIRER early last night that he could not do so because he had yet to speak with Davide

PRESIDENT/A10

GENERALS of the Armed Forces came to the Inquirer Tuesday night to assure the nation that their red alert status is a preemptive move against potential saboteurs/ terrorists who intend to spread anxiety and fear. From right, AFP Chief of Staff Gen.Narciso Abaya; Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia; Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics Maj. Gen. Cicero Castellno; Deputy Chief of Staff for Capability, Materials Tech. Dev. Major. Gen. Reynaldo Rivera; Commanding Gen. Civil Relations Service, Brig. Gen. Victor Corpuz and ISAFP chief, Commodore Tirso Danga. BOY CABRIDO

House: High court has no jurisdiction

**By Carlito Pablo
and Philip C. Tubeza**

THE LEGAL battle starts today over the constitutionality of the impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

Ironically, the oral arguments will be heard at the Supreme Court's new session hall, the refurbishments of which are described as exorbitant by Davide's critics and are among the reasons they are pushing for his ouster.

But the House of Representatives will not send a legal counsel to take part in the oral arguments, purportedly in keeping with its position that the high court has no jurisdiction over the chamber.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. said the House had made its stand clear on the matter in the 33-page "special appearance with manifestation" it submitted Monday before the tribunal.

"We have agreed that we will not appear," De Venecia said yesterday in a statement.

Nevertheless, the high court is ready to hold daily hearings on the petitions questioning the constitutionality of Davide's impeachment.

"We are ready," Clerk of Court Luzviminda Puno said as court employees prepared the new session hall.

LEGAL/A8

GMA, Danding will not allow JDV to be unseated

**By Michael Lim Ubac,
Norman Bordadora
and Cynthia D. Balana**

NEITHER President Macapagal-Arroyo nor businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco will allow Speaker Jose de Venecia to lose the top post at the House of Representatives, administration maverick Sen. Joker Arroyo said yesterday.

"I don't think that he will be unseated. The crux of the matter is the alliance between the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) and Lakas will be held at all cost. That's the marching orders (from Malacañang)," Arroyo said.

He made the claim even as colleagues of Rep. William "Wimpy" Fuentebella denied that the Camarines Sur congressman had issued a threat that the NPC would depose De Venecia if Congress failed to transmit the Articles of Impeachment against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. to the Senate.

"[The move to oust De Venecia was] not even discussed. That's not on the table. But that's not exactly what Congressman Fuentebella said because I just talked to him about that," NPC spokesper-

UNSEATING/A10

President defends military red alert

**By Gil Cabacungan Jr.,
Christian V. Esguerra
and TJ Burgonio**

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday defended placing the Armed Forces on red alert, despite criticism that it was Malacañang itself that was fueling the recent coup rumors.

In a statement, Ms Macapagal said: "A red alert is a pro-active move and this means the situation is under control. It should call for calm and not hysterics as we are safeguarding public order against any transient instabilities."

The President emphasized that this was merely a preemptive move against any destabilization attempt, as she assured the public that her administration was on top of the situation.

Retired Gen. Ramon Montano had earlier condemned Malacañang officials for fanning destabilization rumors, allegedly to divert public attention from criticism of the Macapagal administration.

Ms Macapagal justified her cautious stance by noting that "the threat of opportunistic destabilization always runs parallel with transient political controversies and we must not take any chances or lower our guard."

The President ordered the police and military to observe "maximum tolerance" in dealing with legitimate and peaceful mass actions that were being mounted either in support or against the impeachment of Davide over the alleged misuse of the Judiciary Development Fund.

"We shall calmly but firmly hold the middle ground of law and order and peaceable protest. We will protect the legitimate exercise of civil rights but we will intercept criminal saboteurs or agents provocateur," she said.

Political analyst Joel Rocamora said the impeachment row was providing justification for a coup attempt, but the ability to mount an uprising was another story.

PRESIDENT/A22

GMA IN BOHOL
On Tuesday, President Macapagal declares Panglao Island in Bohol as the first tourism economic zone and unveils the P100-M harbor view project and boardwalk at the Tagbilaran tourism seaport. She also inaugurates a bridge in Tabuan, Antequera, Bohol. *(Story on Page A6)* VAL HANDUMON

NUMBERS GAME

It's 'agaw-pirma' vs 'dagdag-pirma'

**By Carlito Pablo
and Norman Bordadora**

HAS THE "agaw-pirma" (signature snatching) campaign met its match? Pro-impeachment congressmen said they were gathering more signatures to the second impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., to neutralize the Lakas-led campaign.

Call it "dagdag-pirma" (signature gathering).

"Some of our colleagues have manifested their intention to sign," said Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio (NPC, South Cotabato).

Custodio declined to identify her colleagues, but House insiders familiar with the ongoing numbers game said that at least three congressmen had committed to support the impeachment of Davide.

"Yes, of course. That's accurate," Custodio responded when asked point blank if the pro-impeachment congressmen, led by Nationalist Peoples Coalition members, are determined to neutralize the "agaw-pirma" drive.

IT'S/A22

Davide gave Senate detailed JDF records in March last year

**By Michael Lim Ubac
and Philip C. Tubeza**

A DETAILED list of the expenditures of the Judiciary Development Fund which includes the expenses for furniture and building renovation had already been submitted to the Senate as early as March 2002, according to administration Sen. Francis Pangilinan.

Even as Pangilinan yesterday said there was no need to compel Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. to open the books on the disbursement of the JDF as required by the House of Representatives, Davide himself ordered yesterday the SC's Fiscal Management and Budget Office (FMBO) to open up the JDF records and its savings to clear up once and for all allegations of misuse of the fund.

Pangilinan said that the JDF records had been already submitted to Congress, through the Senate committee on justice and human rights chaired by Pangilinan.

The high court furnished the Senate with the list of expenses charged against the JDF when the upper chamber was deliberating Senate Bill No. 2018, or the proposed act raising the allowances of judges and justices.

The act was signed into law last month.

"There is no truth to the allegation that Davide's refusal to turn over JDF disbursements to the House is in order to hide irregularities," said Pangilinan who stressed that if the SC had something to hide, "it wouldn't have so freely provided the Senate with copies of JDF disbursements."

"Records will show that we have been in possession of the documents for some time. There was no attempt on the part of the SC to refuse to cooperate in providing us with the needed documents for a period of three years, as we defended the bill," said Pangilinan.

He said the documents were also made available to other senators who requested copies of the same.

DAVIDE/A22

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/11/05/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

MILF dared: Cut off JI

By Gil C. Cabacungan and Christian V. Esguerra

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday called on the leaders of the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front leaders to "walk the talk" in their commitment to renounce terrorism by cutting its ties with terrorists or terrorist groups, particularly the Jemaah Islamiyah and the Abu Sayyaf.

"We are counting on the words of MILF leaders renouncing terrorism and that we also expect that they would substantiate this renunciation with concrete action to purge terrorists from their ranks and units. This is an important confidence-building measure in the peace process," the President said in a statement.

Ms Macapagal issued the statement in the wake of the revelations of Taufek Refke, the JI's second top-ranked leader in the Philippines, who was captured late last month.

Refke revealed while under interrogation that the MILF has been supporting the operations of the regional terrorist network in Mindanao, providing JI operatives with safe houses and training facilities for new recruits.

Refke's revelations gave the lie to the MILF leadership's oft-repeated statements that the Muslim-led rebel group has long severed its ties with terrorist organizations, one of the conditions set by the government for resuming the stalled peace talks.

The military has suspected that the MILF harbored the fugitive Indonesian bomb-maker Fathur Roman al-Ghozi after his escape from a high-security cell in Camp Crame. It now believes that the MILF also provided shelter to the 30 JI operatives who managed to escape when their safe house was raided.

The government has so far refused to link the MILF to the JI or any terror group even in the face of PNP and AFP charges that the group was helping the JI.

The MILF, reacting to Refke's revelations, yesterday said it was willing to open all of its camps to government inspection.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said representatives from the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces could visit the group's eight base commands scattered all over Mindanao "anytime."

He said they would find no JI training facilities in any of these camps or any evidence linking the MILF to the terrorist group. *With a report from Rosa-May V. de Guzman, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Peso is top gainer after big slide

By Clarissa S. Batino

AFTER initially falling to P55.60 in early trade, the peso yesterday emerged as Asia's top currency gainer when it closed at P55.36, defying regional weakness and lingering anxiety caused by a new round of coup jitters.

The peso's slide was halted after the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas intervened, selling between $5 and $10 million at the spot market yesterday as soon as the peso fell to P55.60.

Turnover was a measly $111.5 million against $125 million last Monday, indicating the absence of corporate demand.

"At P55.60, most people realize the peso is undervalued so banks started selling. And together with some dollars sold by the BSP, the peso recovered yesterday," explained a currency trader.

The peso recovered 0.21 percent of the value previously lost when it closed at P55.48 on Monday as major regional currencies like the Japanese yen and Korean won took a beating.

On a year-to-date basis, the peso improved its standing and ended yesterday as only the second poorest performer after losing 3.2 percent of its value since the start of the year. The local currency was dislodged by the Korean won from the region's worst-performing list for the year.

Traders are now more bullish on the peso after yesterday's performance as the momentum could ease the buying pressure on the spot market at a time when remittances from overseas workers are seen to start pouring. Offshore workers send about $7 billion each year.

Erap lawyers push their luck

THE LAWYERS of jailed ex-President Estrada apparently feel they might as well go the whole hog.

Yesterday, they not only asked the Sandiganbayan to reverse an earlier ruling rejecting Estrada's petition to be allowed to seek treatment abroad, they also asked the anti-graft court to let the disgraced ex-president stay at his San Juan home while undergoing therapy.

In their dual-purpose motion, Estrada's court-appointed lawyers Manuel Pamaran and Noel Malaya quoted the claim of Estrada's doctors that "there is an urgent need for a surgery to be done on [Estrada's] knees and on his lumbo-sacral [spinal column] section."

They claimed that "if no surgery is done ... immediately, [Estrada] may become paralyzed from [the] waist down."

As Estrada preferred that the operation be performed by Dr. Christopher Mow of the Stanford Medical Center in California, they asked that he be allowed to travel to the United States for the operation.

Also, since his doctors have recommended that Estrada undergo rehabilitation therapy to relieve him of "pain," the lawyers asked that the ousted president be allowed to stay at his Polk St. home while undergoing "daily" therapy at the Asian Medical Center or the Cardinal Santos Memorial Hospital.

Estrada, who is being tried for the capital and non-bailable offense of plunder, is detained at a police camp in Camp Capinpin, Tanay, Rizal.

A hearing on the motion has been set for 8:30 a.m. today. *Armand Nocum*

Gordons, BCDA chief swap barbs

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—A four-hour meeting on the Subic-Clark Alliance for Development (Scad) project on Monday ended in an exchange of insults between Bases Conversion Development Authority Chair Rufo Colayco and Olongapo City Mayor Katherine Gordon.

The meeting, held at the offices of the National Economic and Development Authority in Pasig City, tackled the Scad and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority port development project.

Gordon and her husband, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon, are opposing the projects because of their supposed adverse impact on the development of Olongapo.

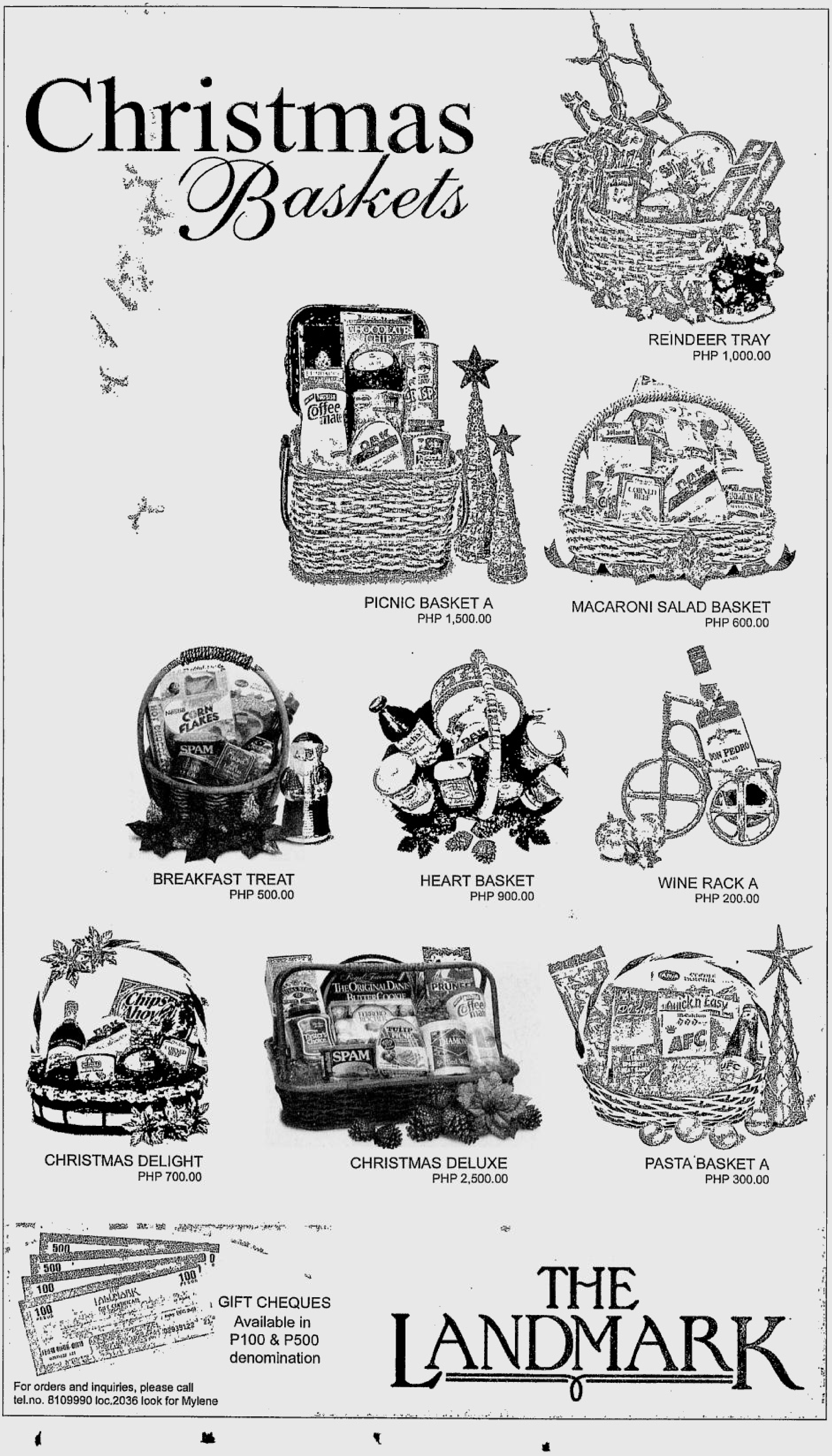
The mayor, in a joint statement with the city council, and Colayco, in a telephone interview on Tuesday, confirmed the confrontation but gave different versions.

The city council condemned Colayco's "unbecoming actions, unsavory words, arrogance and offensive behavior."

Mayor Gordon recounted: "I shook his hand and clarified certain points he raised during the meeting. (He) mockingly said ... we were opposed to the Scad and the port project because we were afraid to lose our beloved airport."

In the same statement, Rely Javier, executive vice-president of the Subic Bay Resorts Association, claimed he witnessed the incident. He said Colayco "sarcastically" told the mayor, "Oh, please, don't (shed) your crocodile tears."

Colayco admitted saying these because he had to "endure the endless insults of the Gordons" and their supporters during the meeting. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



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THE LANDMARK

Petron, Shell raise prices by 40¢ a liter

By Ronnel W. Domingo

OIL majors Pilipinas Shell and Petron Corp. yesterday announced an increase in the prices of their gasoline, diesel and kerosene products by 40 centavos per liter and of liquefied petroleum gas by P1 per kilogram starting at midnight last night.

New player Eastern Petroleum said it would follow suit and increase its pump prices by the same rates at noon today.

Roberto Kanapi, Pilipinas Shell general manager for external affairs, said the price adjustments were a direct result of the sustained increases in the international prices of crude and finished petroleum products, as well as currency fluctuations.

The Eastern Petroleum chair Fernando Martinez hinted consumers could be looking at another round of price hikes after this one as oil prices should go up by 90 centavos per liter of gasoline and 70 centavos per liter of diesel.

"We will know, by the middle of the month if there will be another round of price hikes," Martinez said.

Data from the energy department showed that Dubai crude prices went up by $1.16 to $26.55 per barrel in October, up from $25.37 per barrel in September.

Mean of Platts Singapore—the benchmark for finished petroleum products—prices for unleaded gasoline went up by $2.43 to $35.54 a barrel in October, from $33.11 per barrel the previous month.

Mops prices for diesel shot up by $1.15 to $32.86 a barrel last month, from $31.71 a barrel in September.

The peso depreciated by 32 centavos to P55.34 to the dollar in October, from P55.02 a month earlier.

Shell's Kanapi explained that the rise in international contract prices of oil was brought about by the high seasonal demand in China and Japan during the onset of winter.

He said oil contract prices went up by $25 in October, from $255 a ton in September to $280.

The latest price increases will mean that retail prices of an 11-kg cylinder of Shellane would now cost about P310 in Metro Manila.

Pump prices last went up in the second week of October with gasoline, diesel and kerosene increasing by 25 centavos per liter.

The oil companies yesterday said they would continue to maintain the discount programs for transport groups that are being implemented in selected filling stations in Metro Manila and neighboring provinces.

Discounts are as high as 40 centavos per liter of diesel for buses and jeepneys. Another tack is to fix the price at P15.50 per liter.

SMC shrugs off boycott in Cebu

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The move to boycott San Miguel Corp. products in protest of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.'s impeachment has not affected the giant food and beverage firm at all, according to a company official.

In fact increased sales had been noted, said Romelinda Garces, SMC-Cebu communications director. She attributed this to all that media plugging. "In a way, we gained free endorsement," Garces said.

She reported that man-on-the-street interviews conducted by local television stations showed that many people remained "loyal" to SMC products.

The plant in Cebu delivers the supplies, beer varieties in particular, to SMC markets in the Visayas and parts of Northern Luzon and Northern Mindanao.

Convenors of the Citizens for Judicial Independence (CJI) launched the boycott two weeks ago against all SMC merchandise, including animal feeds. This was in the belief that businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, who heads SMC, was behind the impeachment.

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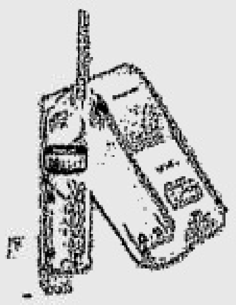

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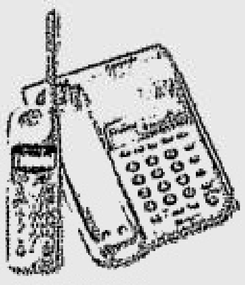

KX-TC1230
P5,490

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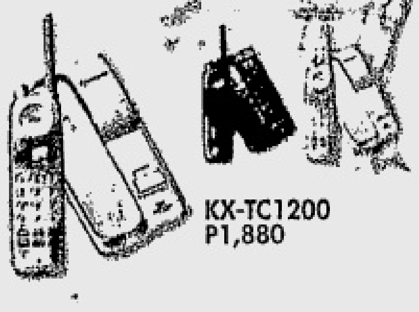
P3,890



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DAVIDE vs. GOLIATH

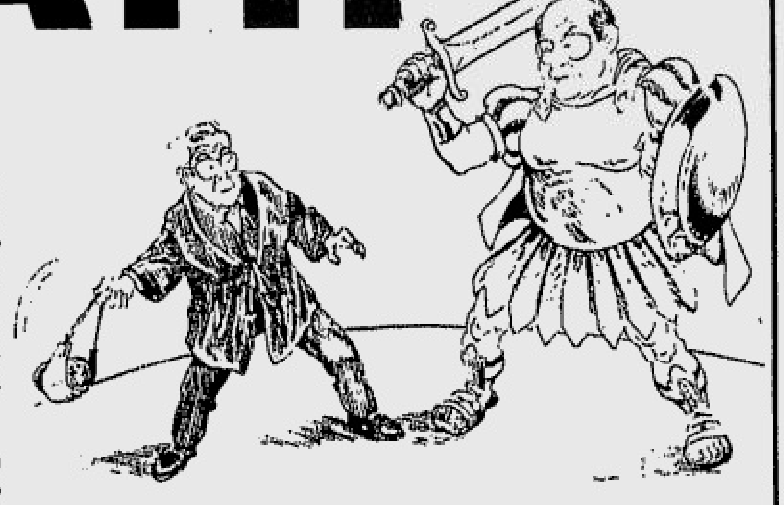
"For evil to succeed, let good men do nothing."

THE IMPEACHMENT complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. is an attack not only on a righteous man but on the independence of an institution that has found the courage to decide for the good of the many and not of the powerful few.

The impeachment complaint baselessly accuses Justice Davide of irregularities in the disbursements of the Judiciary Development Fund (JDF). However, the disbursements were approved by the Supreme Court en banc and passed through, indeed were allowed by, no less than the Commission on Audit.

The move to impeach the Chief Justice is no accident. Initiated by an inquisition led by Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) Wimpy Fuentebella, it is a deliberate, well-planned and malicious attempt to impinge upon the fiscal independence of the judiciary and, ultimately, to publicly discredit the Chief Justice. Through outright misrepresentations and exaggerations about alleged Supreme Court "mansions," which were really cottages in urgent need of repair, and so-called "luxury" vehicles which are really Toyota Camry service vehicles for officials co-equal with the President and the members of Congress, the NPC is laying the groundwork for its final assault on the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court.

Neither is the impeachment without an agenda. It is no coincidence that the impeachment was filed at a time when the Supreme Court is about to decide the coco levy cases which have deep ramifications on the interest of Danding Cojuangco, the Boss of the NPC. Danding's agents, by their incursion into the judiciary's fiscal independence and their attack upon the Chief Justice, are attempting to hold hostage the Supreme Court, with the ultimate end of making the Supreme Court bow to their principal.



We must not sanction such naked abuse of political power and cynical perversion of our democratic processes. We must stand firm against such brazen attempts to undermine our political and economic stability and cast the country into chaos – just to serve the interests of one man at the expense of the entire nation and the future of our children.

It is time for all good men and women to stand up and be counted in this protracted fight against evil. Let us join David in his battle against Goliath. Support Davide against today's Goliath!

The biblical Goliath was defeated. With our united and collective action, our modern day David can and will prevail!

The TRUTH

Q: What is the JDF?

The JDF or the Judiciary Development Fund is a fund established by Presidential Decree No. 1949. Its aim is "to help ensure and guarantee the independence of the Judiciary as mandated by the Constitution and public policy and required by the impartial administration of justice."

Q: Where does the JDF come from?

The JDF comes from the increase in collections of legal fees in all courts over the 1984 fee levels, and not from an appropriation made by Congress. The incremental fees collected do not go to the Treasury of the Republic but are automatically appropriated by the Decree (PD 1949) for the use of the Judiciary.

Q: What is meant by "judicial independence"?

Judicial independence is a constitutional principle which means that the courts, whose task is to render decisions in all cases brought before them, should be free from interference from anyone, including the two other branches of government. From this stems another principle, fiscal autonomy, which means that the appropriations for the administrative expenses of the Judiciary cannot be diminished and should be released automatically.

Q: Who allocates the disbursements of the JDF?

P.D. 1949 vests the Chief Justice with the sole, exclusive power and duty to approve disbursements and expenditures of the JDF. But Chief Justice Davide democratized decision-making on the JDF by creating a 2-step process. First, the proposed disbursement is submitted to a committee chaired by a Justice or Justices. Then, the recommendation of that committee is submitted to the entire 15-man Supreme Court (*en banc*) for approval.

Q: Who is tasked with determining whether the JDF is spent according to law?

P.D. 1949 gives the Commission on Audit (COA), a constitutional body, the authority and duty to audit the JDF and see to it that it is spent in accordance with the mandate of the Decree.

While COA is required to submit its findings to the top officials of the judiciary, neither Congress nor the President are included among those to whom the COA report should be submitted. Their exclusion is precisely because the intent of P.D. 1949 is to enhance and guarantee the independence of the judiciary.

Q: How is the JDF allocated?

By law, 80% of the JDF is allocated for the allowances of the members and personnel of the Judiciary. The collection for any given year is multiplied by 80% and this is distributed among the members and personnel of the judiciary in the form of Cost of Living Allowance (COLA). The remaining 20% is used to finance the acquisition, maintenance and repair of office equipment and facilities.

Q: How often is the 80% COLA allocation paid to the court employees?

From 1985 to March 1997, the COLA was distributed annually. From April 1997 to August 2000, it was distributed semi-annually or quarterly. From September 2000 up to the present, it is distributed monthly.

Q: Is it true that the 80% allocation for the COLA is being used for infrastructure projects of the Supreme Court?

NO. There was never an instance that the 80% allocation of the JDF was used for infrastructure projects. All acquisitions and ongoing improvements of court facilities and equipment are charged to the 20% component of the JDF.

Q: How much JDF-COLA do court employees receive now, and how often?

The JDF-COLA is distributed in proportion to the basic salaries of the members and personnel of the Judiciary. Personnel receiving lower salaries are granted bigger allowances; personnel receiving higher salaries are granted lower allowances.

The amount depends on the deposits as shown in the bank statement as of a given date. Thus:

Table 1.

Date of Approval	September 30, 2003
Period Covered	September 1-30, 2003
Total deposits as of Sept. 30, 2003	P92,535,895.30
80% of total deposit	P74,028,716.24
Add: Undistributed Balance of COLA as of Aug. 31, 2003*	P2,712,178.35
Total COLA for distribution	P76,740,894.59
Distribution Particulars	
Personnel with salary below P7,000 (5,983px X P3,000)	P17,949,000.00
Personnel with salary of P7,001 – P10,000 (8,492px X P2,750)	P23,353,000.00
P10,000 and above (11,896px X P2,500)	P29,740,000.00
HOJ Casual employees (470px X P1,500)	P705,000.00
TOTAL	P71,747,000.00
Undistributed amount To be carried over to the next distribution period**	P4,993,894.59

*/** The amount distributed to employees is in round figures, hence the undistributed balance. The balance will be carried over to the next distribution period.

Q: How does the foregoing compare with what the employees received in prior years?

From 1985 to March 1997, the JDF-COLA was distributed annually. From April 1997 to August 2000, it was distributed eithersemi-annually or quarterly. From October 2000 up to the present, it is generally distributed monthly.

The following table shows that the JDF-COLA amounts annually received by employees from 2000-2003 are higher than the JDF-COLA amounts received from 1995-1999.

Table 2.

	1995	1996	1997	1998
Personnel receiving below 7,000	6,000.00	7,500.00	16,500.00	25,500.00
7,001-10,000	5,800.00	7,000.00	15,000.00	24,000.00
10,000 and above	5,500.00	6,500.00	13,500.00	22,500.00
	1999	**2000**	**2001**	**2002**
Personnel receiving below 7,000	16,000.00	52,500.00	48,000.00	40,250.00
7,001-10,000	14,500.00	49,500.00	44,050.00	37,750.00
10,000 and above	13,000.00	46,500.00	40,000.00	35,250.00

	Jan to Sept 2003
Personnel receiving below 7,000	32,850.00
7,001-10,000	30,200.00
10,000 and above	27,550.00

Q: Why can't the total 80% of the JDF be disbursed entirely during the same year?

The total collections for any given year will only be determined after all the collection reports have been recorded in the books of accounts. This takes time because the reports come from the courts all over the country. Only when the total collection for the year has been determined will the total COLA allocation (80% of the collections) for that year be finally determined.

Q: Was the manner of computation of COLA used by Congressmen Fuentebella and Teodoro correct?

NO. The beginning balance of the JDF should not be added to the collections for the year.

Besides, for the year 2001, the collections for the year included contractor's retention fee which should be deducted in determining the 80% for COLA and 20% for facilities and equipment.

Table 3. Wrong Determination of Unpaid COLA made by the complainants.

	2000	2001	2002
Beginning Balance	676,915,468.65	275,777,697.07	545,928,301.23
Collections for the year	1,067,564,852.36	1,523,305,376.93	1,314,467,707.13
Total JDF	1,744,480,321.01	1,799,083,074.00	1,860,396,008.36
80% for COLA	1,395,584,256.81	1,439,266,459.20	1,488,316,806.69
Actual COLA	1,380,098,904.80	1,156,777,508.53	960,449,613.78
Underpaid COLA*	15,485,352.01	282,488,950.67	527,867,192.91

Should have been excluded

*Wrong totals

Q: Did the Court spend P100,000.00 per chair for the 15 Justices in the en banc Session Hall?

No. This figure seems to have been pulled out from nowhere. All the vouchers, reports and records reveal no such purchase.

Q. Is it true that the curtains and draperies of the Session Hall alone cost P5.5 million?

NO. This amount was spent for curtains and draperies not only for the *en banc* Session Hall but also for the following rooms: (a) Division Session Hall; (b) 3 Division Conference Rooms; and (c) *En banc* dining room.

These are heavy draperies designed to improve the acoustics and give a highly dignified environment. It must be pointed out that this amount covers not only curtains and draperies but also the cost of labor and accessories.

Q: Did the SC purchase 19 luxury cars?

No. The cars purchased by the Supreme Court consist of mid-level sedans (Toyota Camrys) for the use of the Justices, which are certainly very modest given their stature, in comparison to Ford Expeditions, Pajeros, and other SUVs used by our Honorable Congressmen. Under an existing COA Ruling, the Chief Justice, as head of the third branch of government, is entitled to a Mercedes Benz, but he did not even consider it.

The Supreme Court also purchased four (4) shuttle buses for the use of its employees. Super Grandias were also purchased for the use of the justices and their staff. It must be noted that the total cost of P30 million for the item "vehicles" covers all vehicle purchases for the years 2000, 2001 and 2002.

Q: Is it true that the Baguio City cottages and duplex staff house cost P34 million?

NO. The project cost covers not only the labor and materials for the construction of the cottages and staff house itself, but also includes the cost of developing the site. Such site development expenses included topographical survey tests, soil investigation, bored pilings, construction of the retaining wall, and construction of access roads, which constituted the bulk of the P34 million.

Q: Why were the cottages and staff house constructed?

Since the early 1900's, the Court has been holding summer sessions in Baguio City. Two cottages were constructed to replace the cottage that was totally damaged during the 1990 earthquake and to provide one more cottage to complete the 15 cottages needed by the Court. The duplex staff house will be used by court officials and employees in addition to the present staff house. As the Chief Justice explained in his letter to Speaker de Venecia dated September 30, 2003, they will be used beyond his term, in the same way that the early 20th century vintage cottages are still being used today. "Their construction now may, in the end, prove to be more economical not only because of the rising costs of construction materials, but also because without these cottages, the last two junior Members of the Court would have to be accommodated during the summer sessions in hotels, which would entail more expense to the Court."

Q: Why did the Supreme Court embark on the construction of the five-storey SC-CA Multi-Purpose Building?

The construction of the Multi-Purpose Building in the SC Compound addresses the need for more office and parking spaces not just for the SC but for the Court of Appeals as well. The first two floors of the SC-CA Building will house the offices of the Court of Appeals. The third and fourth floors will serve as parking spaces, which are sorely lacking in Ermita, Manila where the Supreme Court complex is located. The fifth floor will be the multi-purpose hall for the use of the Supreme Court. The project cost of P100 million includes the design consultancy fee, the project management fee, and the contractor's fee.

As the Chief Justice explained in his letter to Speaker de Venecia, the expenditures for renovation of existing and construction of new infrastructure were to address the growing needs for space of the judiciary that the appropriations for capital outlay could not meet. He pointed out that "(t)he old Session Hall had become so small for hearing of cases of national interest that the public had to be accommodated in the hallways." Thus, a loft was constructed within the hall. "The Memorabilia Room was renovated to provide for a Division Session Hall, as not one of the three Divisions of the Supreme Court has a session hall, . . The design of the renovated areas, most specially the Session Halls, reflects the dignity that the Supreme Court, as the final arbiter of controversies and interpreter of laws under the Constitution, deserves. These projects were part of the Court's centennial programs of modernization. Our country and our people would be proud of these renovations."

To sum up, all of these construction and renovations, which are meant to last for generations, were spent without a single cent from taxes, and despite the serious handicap that Congress itself inflicted upon the judiciary. It is truly a noble program worthy of the admiration, not the castigation, of the Filipino people.

Q: Did COA make any finding of irregularity or overpricing in these JDF disbursements?

NO. Otherwise, it would have already disallowed these expenditures which would have been reflected in the Audit Report.

Q: Is it true that the Chief Justice refuses to open the books of the JDF to Congress?

NO. The Chief Justice already pointed out in his letter to Speaker de Venecia that COA had issued an audit report on the JDF, and is in possession of all relevant documents and vouchers. It was the Chief Justice who requested COA in June 2003 to finish the audit of the JDF as soon as possible, and to submit a consolidated audit report from the beginning of the fund, if still possible. In the same letter to Speaker de Venecia, he went to explain at great length the program of allocation and disbursement of the Fund, for both the 80% portion and the 20% portion. Had the Chief Justice wanted to hide anything, he would not be the one to hurry the completion of the audit. COA has already submitted to Congress the JDF special audit report for 2000-2002, and documents and vouchers related to vehicles and infrastructure projects.

Q: Is impeachment the solution to inquire into the use of the JDF?

Impeachment is the extreme remedy to remove certain officials for "culpable violation of the constitution, treason, bribery, graft and corruption, other high crimes or betrayal of public trust." Because its misuse can destroy institutions and subject one branch of government to the tyranny of another, procedural and substantive safeguards have been set in place. But it is essentially a political process that is often decided along political lines.

The allegations of the Complaint recite mere accounting and administrative difficulties, essentially a "domestic problem" within the judiciary that should be resolved internally, and to be checked by the unhampered access of the COA to every single voucher involving use of the JDF. Whatever complaint or question there may be on the JDF, impeachment is the most inappropriate remedy. It is like chopping off the head of the judiciary because its extremities are in pain.

To impeach the Chief Justice alone for decisions made collectively by 15 men and women is nothing but political strangulation of the judiciary, through the Chief Justice. It reeks of the foulest moral hypocrisy of those congressmen, who have the gall to impeach the Chief Justice for what may simply be accounting disputes, when their very own wanton lifestyles, pork barrel, luxurious vehicles and illegally-acquired mansions rob generations of the chance for a decent life. It can only throw the country into turmoil, and can reap nothing but ill for all.

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SANDIGAN VERDICT

Solon guilty of nepotism

By Armand Nocum

FOR APPOINTING two relatives to positions under his office while he was mayor of Calbayog City, Western Samar Rep. Reynaldo S. Uy was pronounced guilty of nepotism yesterday.

The Sandiganbayan promptly ordered his arrest, since he failed to show up during the promulgation of the decision.

In the 12-page ruling penned by Associate Justice Norberto Geraldez of the Sandigan Fourth Division, Uy was described as having virtually admitted to the crime when he offered to give "moral or financial help" to two of three complainants, one Sofia Patrimonio and her husband.

"This was, in effect, an offer of compromise," the court said. "In criminal cases... this is an implied admission of guilt."

Patrimonio accused Uy of appointing his nephew, Frederick B. Uy, as foreman at the City General Services office on June 30, 1993. Only two months later, on Sept. 9, 1993, Uy appointed Antonina B. Uy, a niece, as "office helper" in the mayor's office.

The complainants said both appointees were children of the ex-mayor's elder brother, Pedro Uy Sr. During the hearing, Rep. Uy, a member of the Liberal Party, accused his accusers of demanding from him P6 million "in exchange for the execution of an affidavit of desistance."

He said Patrimonio bore a grudge against him and that she had filed the case only because she belonged to a rival political party, as did the third co-complainant, Manuel Barral, a city councilor at the time.

But during cross-examination, Uy reportedly admitted having written a letter offering the Patrimonios "moral and financial help."

The solon also claimed ignorance of the law, saying he assumed that the prohibition applied "only up to the degree of first cousin."

He said he had relied on the certification of the city's Human Resource Management officer "that all requirements (pertaining to the two appointments) had been complied with."

In his decision, Geraldez stressed: "Ignorance of the law excuses no one from the compliance therewith."

Uy eventually terminated his nephew's appointment on December 13, 1993, seven days after the complaint was filed before the Ombudsman's office in the Visayas. He also directed Frederick to refund all compensation and benefits derived from the government.

Unmoved, the anti-graft court said these acts did not erase the fact that the appointments "were covered by the prohibition on nepotism."

The Sandigan ordered Uy to pay a fine of P1,000 "with subsidiary imprisonment in case of insolvency" relative to the first appointment. The same penalty was applied in Antonina's case.

Uy was not available for comment.

Bid winner stands by vote counters

THE CONSORTIUM that won the contract to supply the Commission on Elections with the vote-counting and canvassing machines said it was ready to install the required number of automated counting machines for the May 2004 elections.

The Mega Pacific Consortium (MPC), through spokesman Alfredo Lazaro, Jr., made this assertion yesterday in reaction to the allegations raised by certain groups on the preparedness and dependability of the automated ballot and canvassing machines to be supplied by the company.

A group calling itself May Pagasa had sought the resignation of top Comelec officials for what they claimed was a faulty handling of the bidding and asked the election body to shelve the automation program due to alleged deficiencies of the vote-counting machines.

Lazaro, in a press statement, cited the favorable findings of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), which reported to the Comelec on Oct. 24 that it had tested a total of 456 vote-counting machines and that it found all but one to be 100 percent accurate. The one that did not rate 100 percent had an accuracy rating of 99.998 percent.

Metals Industry Research and Development Center (MIRDC) Executive Director Rolando T. Viloria, chairman of the DOST technical evaluation committee, wrote Comelec Commissioner Resurreccion Z. Borra that "the verification test would show that the machine is 100 percent accurate in reading and counting the votes that are properly shaded, provided that the ballots are fed with the right orientation. Hence, we can safely conclude that the machine has a 100 percent accuracy rating on all environmental conditions."

The testing was conducted by MIRDC.

Viloria stressed in his letter that "the security feature of the existing test software presently installed in the machine already addresses this concern which rejects the ballots if fed improperly (inverted) and allows the machine operator to refeed the ballots (not more than three times) in accordance with the guidelines of the Comelec."

Lazaro said their machine can count 50 ballots per minute and, contrary to allegations, would require only one operator using high-tech automatic feeding of ballots. The machine can read both sides of the ballots simultaneously and detect both fake and previously counted ballots.

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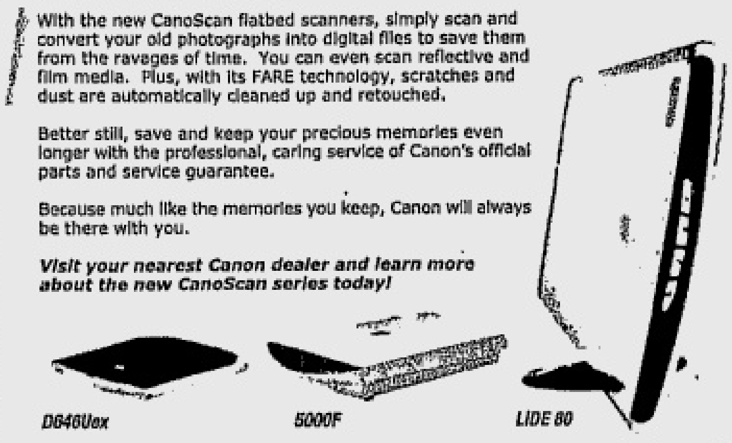

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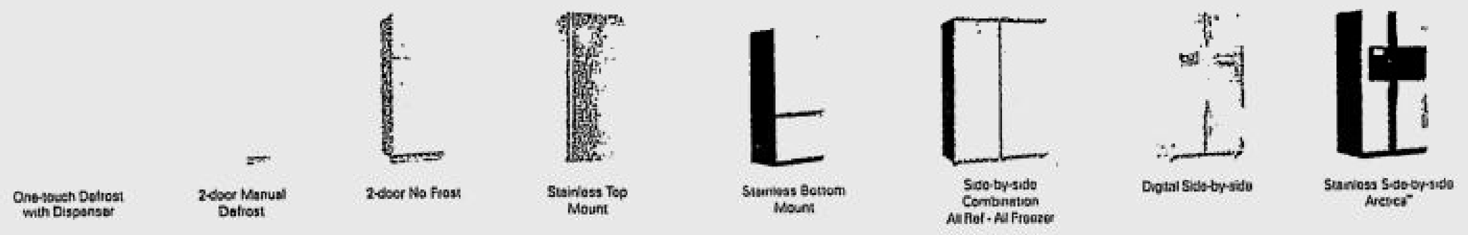
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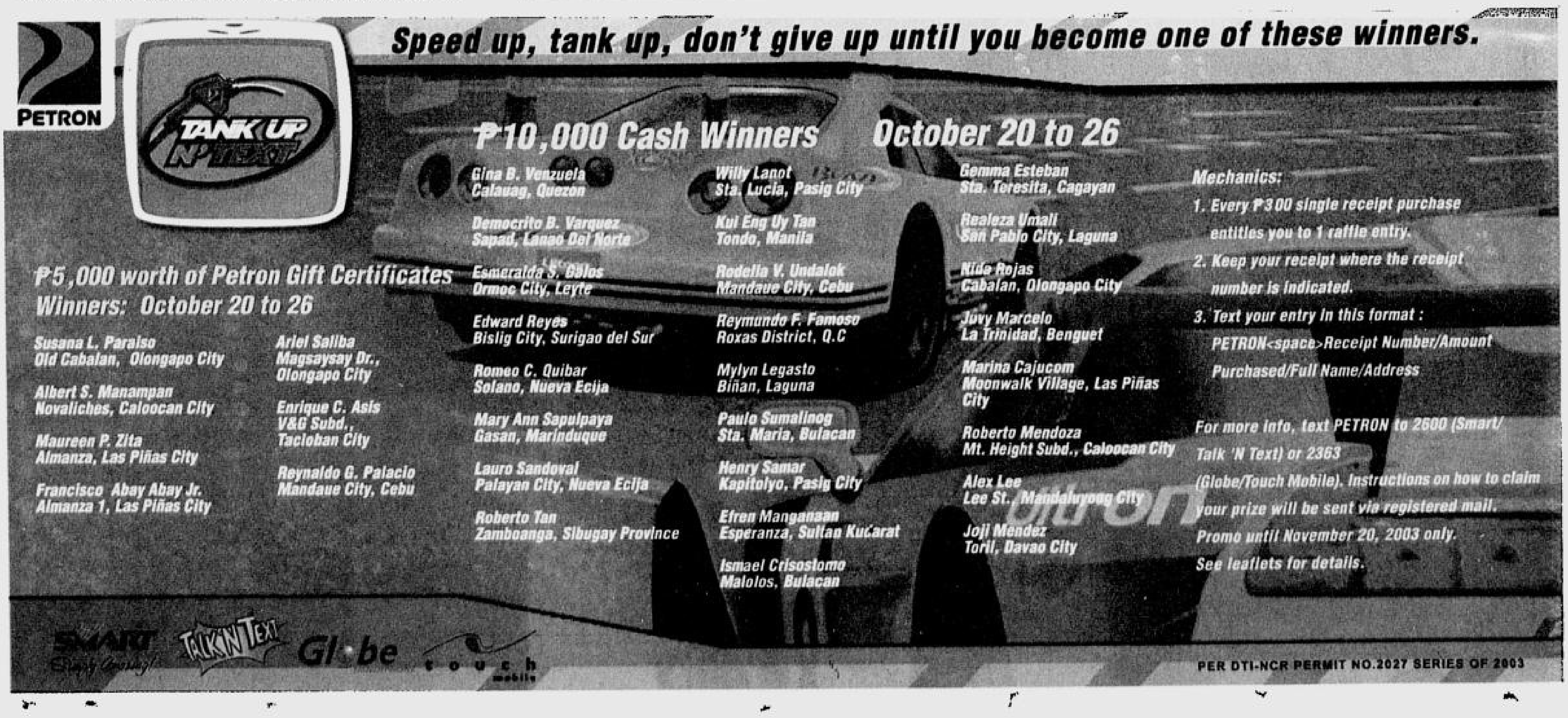

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PER DTI-NCR PERMIT NO.2027 SERIES OF 2003

RTC judge in hot water for favoring Imelda

By Alcuin Papa

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government (PCGG) wants the Supreme Court to remove a Manila judge for "patent judicial misconduct" due to his alleged bias by allowing former First Lady Imelda Marcos to travel to London.

PCGG Commissioner Ruben Carranza said Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 26 judge Oscar Barrientos should resign or be "disciplined" by the High Court for "gross misconduct" after the judge allowed Marcos to travel to London even before her lawyers could seek permission for her to travel to that city.

Carranza said this may indicate Barrientos' bias for the first lady. Barrientos is hearing a criminal case involving 22 counts of alleged dollar-salting, in particular violations of Central Bank regulations, against Marcos and other co-accused.

Marcos was already arraigned for the charges and is out on bail. She is presently abroad after Barrientos granted her request to travel.

Carranza said Marcos had earlier abused her travel privileges which should have merited the cancellation of her bail.

Last Sept. 26, Marcos filed a motion before Barrientos' sala requesting that she be allowed to go the United States for medical treatment and to France, Portugal and Italy for a pilgrimage for a period of 30 days from Oct. 1 to Nov. 1.

On Oct. 2, Barrientos issued an order allowing Marcos to travel to the US and London "only and not in any other places," based on her constitutional right and for humanitarian purposes from Oct. 2 to Nov. 1.

Marcos left the country on Oct. 5, two days after getting permission from the Bureau of Immigration to travel abroad.

However, the PCGG questioned why Barrientos allowed Marcos to go to London which was not included in her original request. It was only after Barrientos granted Imelda's travel request to London that her lawyers filed a motion to include London in her itinerary.

On Oct. 22, her lawyers filed a motion before the Manila court seeking the extension of her travel abroad until Nov. 12. She claimed that her doctor in New York needs to conduct a follow-up examination after Nov. 5 and that her doctor in London also scheduled and appointment with her on Nov. 6.

"He (Barrientos) should have some sense of decency. What he did was out and out misconduct. How did he know Mrs. Marcos wanted to go to London in the first place? Is he the travel agent of Mrs. Marcos? Yet he granted that London trip without waiting for a motion to be filed. He seems to be privy to the travel plans of the accused," Carranza said.

He added Barrientos' actions "might indicate he might end up acquiting Mrs. Marcos" of the charges before his court.

Carranza said he would request the Department of Justice to file a motion before the Supreme Court to remove Barrientos as judge. "This calls for the highest act of discipline from the High Court, not unless he (Barrientos) resigns."

Carranza said the PCGG had already asked Barrientos to inhibit himself from hearing the dollar-salting cases because of the judge's reported association with the late Ambassador Roberto Benedicto, another co-accused.

But Carranza said Barrientos had refused to inhibit himself and the request is now pending before the Court of Appeals.

Move over, Boracay

TAGBILARAN CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday declared Panglao Island in Bohol as the first tourism economic zone in the country as she unveiled the marker to the P100-million expansion project at the Tagbilaran tourism seaport.

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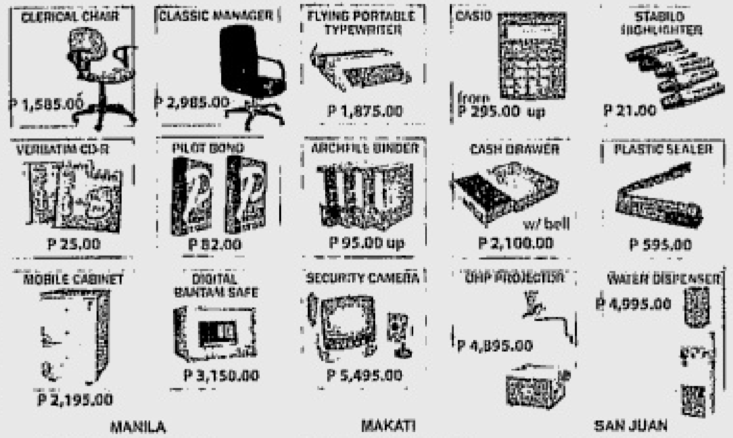

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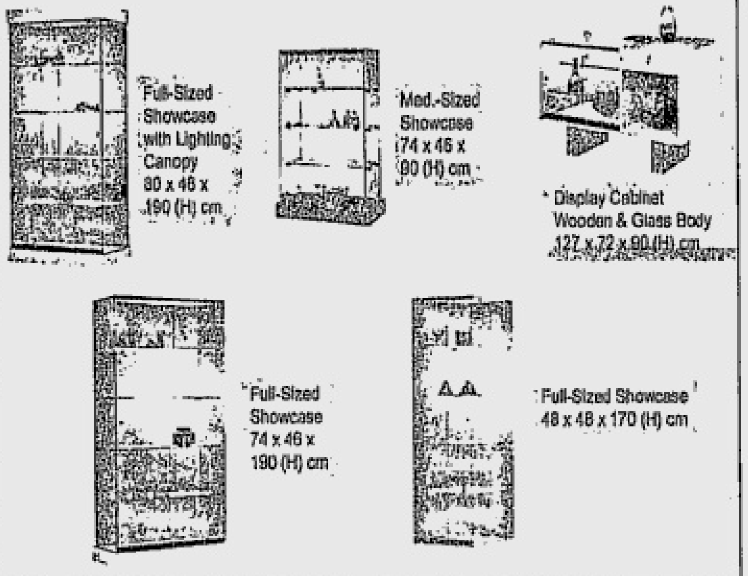

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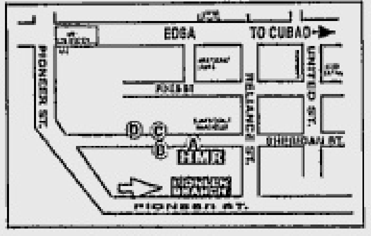

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Top COA auditor of judiciary funds goes on leave

By Armand Nocum

THE AUDITOR of the Commission on Audit who drafted the controversial report on the Judiciary Development Fund has suddenly made herself scarce.

Cecilia Caga-anan, the resident COA auditor at the Supreme Court, has gone on leave, with her officemates giving conflicting reasons for her temporary absence from office.

A COA official said that Caga-anan may already be feeling the pressure from people who want to talk to her regarding her report, including newsmen seeking interviews.

But a colleague of Caga-anan described the auditor, who has been in the service for 25 years, as "straight as an arrow."

"Once she starts investigating something, she never lets go until she gets to the bottom of it," said the COA official.

She credited Caga-anan for uncovering graft in a multi-million airport runway project years ago, among others.

Meanwhile, COA officials have opted to keep mum on Caga-anan's report until the JDF issue has been brought to the Senate as basis for the impeachment complaint against SC Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. or any other investigating body.

COA spokesperson Juanito Recio told the INQUIRER that COA Chair Guillermo Carague and other top COA officials have agreed to provide the necessary materials and to give their testimonies in a proper venue.

Recio said he called up the SC office of Caga-anan and was told she had gone on a "sick leave" starting Monday. Her officemates said they have no idea why Caga-anan went on leave.

"For now, we are not going to make any comment on the issue," Recio said, amid charges that COA is now allegedly tampering with the original 11-page report of Caga-anan to show there had been no irregularities in the JDF funds.

Ousted President Joseph Estrada warned over the weekend that there are now efforts to allegedly tamper with the records and documents on the JDF to show that more than 80 percent of the fund has been allocated to lowly court employees.

"*Ginagamot na ang* COA report. They are trying their best to cure everything," Estrada said.

Davide had claimed that up to 89 percent of the JDF funds were allocated to court employees.

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Legal eagles clash at SC hearing today

From page A1

Puno said either Senior Associate Justice Josue Bellosillo or Justice Reynato Puno would preside over the en banc hearings. The Chief Justice has inhibited himself.

Those who will appear at the high court are Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo, the petitioners, the respondents, as well as eight *amici curiae* earlier appointed by the tribunal.

The eight are among the Philippines' best legal minds: retired Justice Florenz Regalado, Fr. Joaquin Bernas, SJ, Justice Regalado Maambong, retired Justice Hugo Gutierrez Jr., former Justice Minister Estelito Mendoza, Dean Pacifico Agabin, Dean Raul Pangalangan and former Sen. Jovito Salonga.

15 minutes to speak

Said the tribunal en banc in an advisory: "The speakers are allotted 15 minutes each. They are enjoined to observe sobriety and courtesy at all times and to confine their arguments strictly to constitutional and legal grounds, taking into account the historical, philosophical and legal bases of the constitutional provisions and laws involved.

"Those attending the hearing shall observe silence at all times, and any breach thereof will be promptly sanctioned."

The hearing will start at 10 a.m., with a break at lunchtime. It will resume at 1:30 p.m. and end at 5 p.m.

"If necessary, it will be extended from day to day until terminated," the tribunal said.

Chairs and a large video monitor have been set up outside the session hall for those who cannot be seated inside.

No compulsion

Rep. Rolex Suplico (LDP, Iloilo) said he and other members of the House legal team were under no compulsion to appear before the tribunal.

"We have filed our manifestation, and this is enough to put forward the position of the House," he said.

At least six petitions have been filed questioning the legality of Davide's impeachment, including one jointly filed by Rep. Salacnib Baterina (Ilocos Sur) and Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez (Iloilo City), both of the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats.

Baterina and Gonzalez may appear during the oral arguments but they cannot speak for the House.

Waiver

Suplico said that while the petitioners, the House and the Senate had been called for the oral arguments, "there is no requirement for us to appear."

Told that the House would then effectively waive its right to be heard orally, he said: "We may be waiving it."

Suplico also said that even if a counsel for the House would appear, the latter would "only reiterate what we have said in our 'special appearance with manifestation.'"

"Simply said, our position is that the Supreme Court has no jurisdiction over the Davide impeachment," he said.

Legal team

The House leadership had earlier asked private lawyer Mario Ongkiko to serve as counsel, but he declined.

The House has formed a legal team composed of congressmen, supported by the chamber's internal counsel Leonardo Palicte III.

Summing up the House's legal position, De Venecia said the chamber had the "exclusive power to file impeachment proceedings against any justice of the Supreme Court."

"This is a political issue, not a legal issue," he said. "We are saying that the Supreme Court has no jurisdiction over this case."

Points of discussion

According to the tribunal's advisory, the issues to be discussed at the hearing are "whether the certiorari jurisdiction of the Supreme Court may be invoked; who can invoke it; on what issues and at what time; and whether it should be exercised by [the high court] at this time."

Opinion of friends of court

In discussing these issues, the parties may also talk about the legal standing of the petitioners; the "ripeness" of the issue; its political question or "justiciability"; the House's "exclusive" power to initiate all cases of impeachment; the Senate's "sole" power to try and decide all cases of impeachment; the constitutionality of the new House rules on impeachment; and judicial restraint.

The high court will first listen to the opinions of the eight amici curiae before hearing the lawyers for the congressmen and other petitioners who had sought to stop Davide's impeachment.

The lawyers for Congress will then speak, followed by intervenors Sen. Aquilino Pimentel and lawyer Romulo Macalintal. Benipayo will speak last.

JUSTICE Davide orders the opening of the financial records of the JDF on Tuesday to clear once and for all the charge against him of misusing the funds. ERIK ARZAS

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, November 5, 2003
31st Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Rom 13:8-10
Gospel: Lk 14:25-33

One day, when large crowds were walking along with Jesus, he turned and said to them, "If you come to me, without being ready to give up your love for your father and mother, your spouse and children, your brothers and sisters, and indeed yourself, you cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not follow me carrying his own cross cannot be my disciple.

"Do you build a house without first sitting down to count the cost to see whether you have enough to complete it? Otherwise, if you have laid the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone will make fun of you: 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'

"And when a king wages war against another king, does he go to fight without first sitting down to consider whether his ten thousand can stand against the twenty thousand of his opponent? And if not, while the other is still a long way off he sends messengers for peace talks. In the same way, none of you may become my disciple if he doesn't give up everything he has."

Commentary

"Love cannot do the neighbor any harm; so love fulfills the whole Law." My professor in Pastoral counseling makes a good distinction among romantic love, erotic love, love of philia and agape. Accordingly, romantic love is the attraction felt between a man and woman pulling them together into an intimate union. Erotic love is the love of couples in an intimate physical union with the desire to procreate and bear a child. The love of philia is the love of friendship and companionship. And finally the love of agape is the Christian love of doing something for the sake of the beloved. It is to sacrifice your own needs, pleasures, comforts, in order to attend to the well-being and satisfaction of the one you love. What kind of love do you practice?

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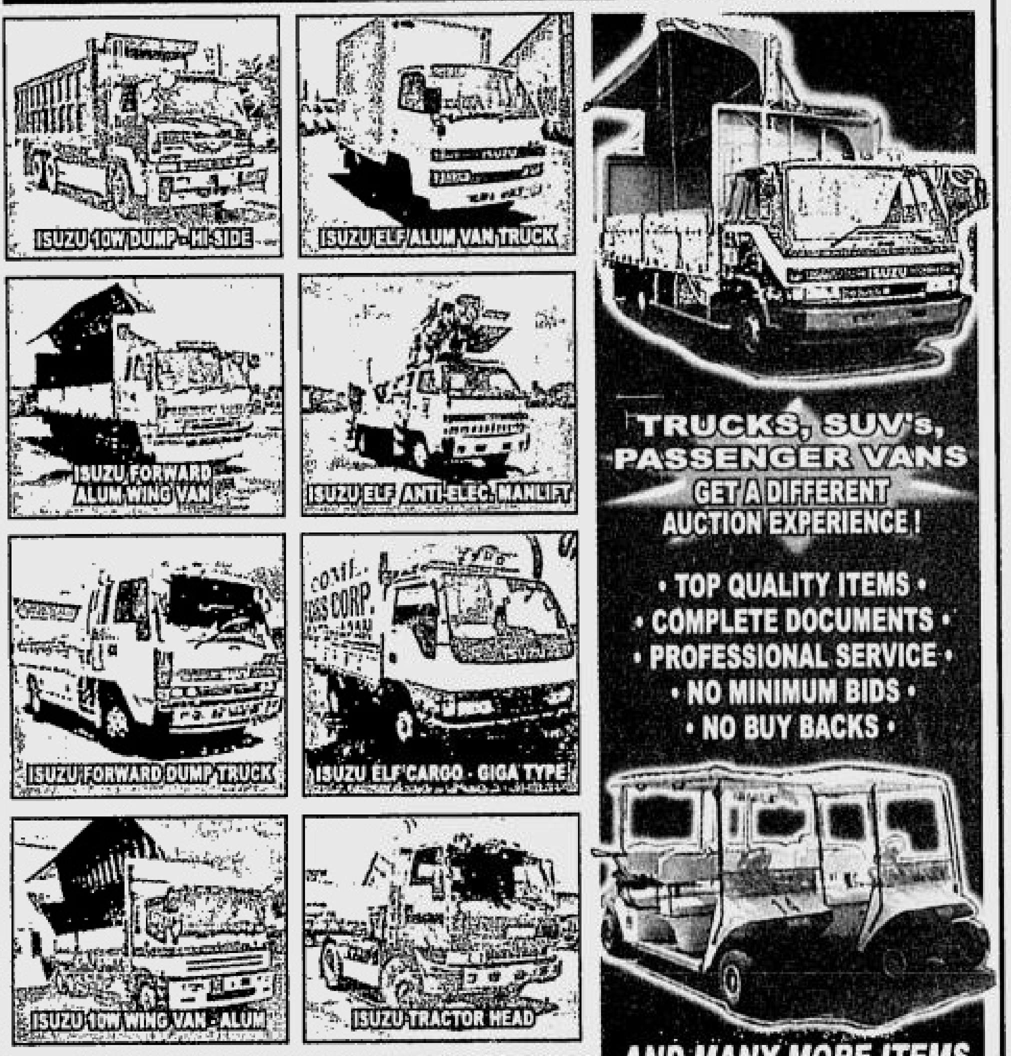
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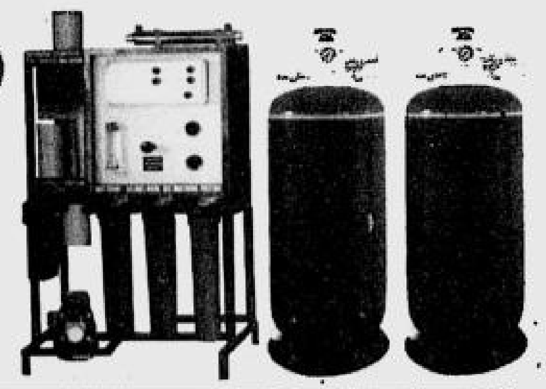

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Travel mag cites Gordon as champion against SARS

By Jerome Aning

A REGIONAL travel trade newspaper based in Bangkok yesterday honored Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon for being one of the "stars" who helped the Asian tourism industry at the height of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome crisis this year.

TTG Asia, one of the most established travel trade newspapers in the region, recognized Gordon for his leadership in advocating the responsible issuance of travel advisories by developed countries against Asian countries affected by SARS.

The secretary, who also chairs the Pacific Asia Travel Association, is the only individual awardee; other honorees were travel-related corporations and organizations. TTG decided to hold a special TTG Honours ceremony in place of its annual Travel Awards this year.

TTG Asia Media managing director Darren Ng acknowledged that the biggest heroes of SARS are those who battled at the frontlines and risked their own lives in order to save other lives, referring to the doctors, nurses and medical researchers.

"But we will not let the remarkable individuals and organizations of our own industry go unnoticed, for they inspire and provide us with hope and confidence for the future," Ng said.

TTG said that the SARS outbreak, the Asian tourism industry's worst crisis, tested the courage, leadership, resilience, tenacity, focus and creativity of individuals and organizations in the region.

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Chloramphenicol susp. 125 mg/5 ml 60 ml	✓ 41.40	394.75	353.35/bot
Co-trimoxazole tab (TM-160mg SMZ-800mg)	✓ 2.30	26.00	23.70/tab
Co-trimoxazole cap. (TM-80mg SMZ-400mg)	✓ 2.60	14.80	12.20/cap
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Unseating JDV not in the cards

From page A1

son Rep. Francis Escudero told the INQUIRER. (But Fuentebella, one of two principal signatories, did issue the threat. *See story on Page A10.*)

In the Senate, Lakas stalwart Sen. Juan Flavier said the possibility that De Venecia might lose his post was not remote.

"I'm not familiar with the dynamics of the House. But let us not forget that his holding of the Speakership is [primarily] a function of Lakas and NPC coalition. If the coalition is lost by default by the Speaker, by the operation of the system he will lose the Speakership."

He added: "It's a very edgy situation."

Impair alliance

But Arroyo said the notion that De Venecia would be ousted by pro-impeachment representatives was patently impossible.

Unseating the Speaker would "impair the alliance," which "is the force that will back President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in 2004."

The President needed De Venecia to ensure that the alliance remains viable, Arroyo added.

Besides Lakas and the NPC, the 2004 alliance will also include the faction of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino identified with Sen. Edgardo Angara and "half of the Liberal Party," Arroyo said.

Arroyo described De Venecia as "so nimble" he could not be easily removed. "He knows [what to do]. He will manage."

"Even if you toss him up like a cat, when he lands, he would be on his four feet," said Arroyo.

Flavier's take

Breaking his silence on the Davide impeachment crisis, Flavier noted that of the 226 congressmen, 60 were NPC members while 80 were members of the ruling party.

The President herself, he said, was treading on dangerous ground.

ARROYO

DE VENECIA PDI PHOTO

He still expressed optimism, however, that the situation was still under control by Malacañang. "I know it will be resolved. If not, it will develop into something more damaging. As of now, I don't see it yet. Maybe, I'm being naive. Let's put it this way. [It's] difficult, not yet shaky."

Praise JDV

He praised De Venecia for his efforts to break the impasse. "He is on top of the whole system. It's not easy to do that."

But he quickly added: "When he starts to make a major mistake, and he loses the stamp of the NPC, then [he will have to go]."

He noted that De Venecia tried to block the impeachment last week. "The NPC members were very unhappy, then eventually, you will notice how he actually changed his mind and supported it. I think that's part of the whole dynamics [in the House]."

Arroyo had earlier accused Ms Macapagal and Cojuangco of conspiring to impeach Davide, who he said was sacrificed on the altar of "Lakas-NPC unity for the reelection of President Macapagal. "What are the stakes? One hundred billion pesos worth of San Miguel shares."

Just an option

Fuentebella clarified that the possible ouster of De Venecia was only one of the options their group was considering should the impeachment case fail.

Fuentebella clarified that the plan to unseat De Venecia was not a done deal. "[The unseating of Speaker De Venecia] is just one of the options. We have yet to meet on the matter and there is nothing definite as of this time," Fuentebella told reporters yesterday, after addressing a symposium on the impeachment complaint.

"We still don't know if we would unseat Speaker De Venecia," he said.

Fuentebella declined to answer further questions on the NPC's plans, but noted that three more signatures may be added to the 88 already on the complaint.

"It's like a game of chess (*Story on Page A1*). I cannot tell you what we would do next because the other side would know our plan. We would be on the losing end," Fuentebella said.

"All the options are being considered. We are still waiting for their move," he added.

But Escudero said there was no such plan or move to oust De Venecia.

2 different issues

Escudero said there was no reason to oust the Speaker since he has been helping them. He emphasized that De Venecia's position was not at stake because the matter of ousting him and impeaching Davide were two different issues.

Fuentebella also said he did not really call for De Venecia's ouster and that his statement was taken out of context.

"I just said we're trying to seek all options available and that all options are available. It should not come out that strongly. It was just my personal view," Fuentebella told the INQUIRER.

Informed that the NPC did not have the numbers to oust De Venecia, Fuentebella said, "That's still the question. We don't know."

Fuentebella, however, agreed that the Speaker would be in trouble if he would not comply with the agreement reached during last week's multi-party caucus to transmit the Articles of Impeachment on Nov. 10.

No threat

"This is a House fight. No, I'm not threatening the Speaker. That is not true. But that's how it came out in the newspaper. That's OK. What can I do?" he said.

Negros Oriental Rep. Jacinto Paras, one of the remaining 11 Lakas members who signed the impeachment complaint, said he believed that the report quoting Fuentebella was inaccurate.

"Wimpy is a good boy. He would never advocate that," Paras said.

Impeachment case sparks Alvarez-Padilla word war

By Cynthia Balana

LAKAS spokesperson Heherson Alvarez yesterday accused House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla of signing the impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide without first reading the Commission on Audit report. But Padilla immediately denied this, and called Alvarez a "liar."

The two yesterday engaged in a verbal tussle, not once but twice, in separate radio interviews over the Davide impeachment issue.

Padilla, a member of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, signed the complaint while Alvarez is leading a group of Lakas leaders who are out to persuade party mates to withdraw their signatures.

According to Alvarez, he was in his car when he heard Padilla say over dzRH, in Filipino, "If I had only read the COA report, it's possible I wouldn't have signed the complaint."

Alvarez said he immediately called up the radio station which patched him on the air.

Alvarez said he told Padilla that if this were the case, then Padilla should have withdrawn his signature.

But in another interview with dzBB, Padilla accused Alvarez of lying when the latter was quoted in the INQUIRER that he was convincing the former to withdraw.

Not knowing that Alvarez was also on the other line, Padilla went on to say that he and Alvarez had not seen each other in a long time.

Alvarez, however, butted in to the surprise of Padilla, and reminded the latter that they were both on another radio program when Alvarez made the appeal to Padilla to withdraw his signature.

Padilla, however, said the Articles of Impeachment against top public officials were so rare that they may not even come in the three-year term of a congressman.

"I had to act with utmost fairness. Once you affix your signature to such articles, you have to stand by it. Alvarez may have the tendency for sloppy work but I don't," Padilla said.

Don't call 'em Brat Pack

From page A1

unlikely allies in two Catholic religious leaders who called for an end to loose talk in politics.

El Shaddai leader Mike Velarde said the Brat Pack deserved the respect of the public.

Name-calling

Fr. Romeo Intengan, provincial superior of the Jesuit group Society of Jesus, said such branding especially among government officials would not help find a solution to the impasse between Congress and the Supreme Court.

"We don't like name-calling in general. Let's use institutional names and procedures," Intengan said during a press briefing the other day at the El Shaddai office in Makati City.

"Using (terms such as) Brat Pack during situations of negotiation throws off people."

The press conference was held to announce El Shaddai's prayer rally at the Quirino Grandstand in Rizal Park on Saturday and Sunday to call for an end to the conflict between the Supreme Court and the House of Representatives. Intengan was present to show support for the prayer initiative.

Among those whom Velarde had invited to his prayer rally were President Macapagal-Arroyo and former President Joseph Estrada.

Support Erap request

Velarde was even planning to ask the Sandiganbayan to allow Estrada temporary liberty so he could attend the rally. He also supports Estrada's request to have surgery in the United States.

Intengan, however, said there was "a thin line between reconciliation and arbitrariness" and Velarde would have to consult legal experts on the matter.

Incidentally, Velarde's son, Rene, of the party-list Buhay was one of the 88 signatories to the impeachment complaint.

Children of rich families

The members of Brat Pack are Representatives Felix William Fuentebella (Camarines Sur), Gilbert Teodoro (Tarlac), Mark Cojuangco (Pangasinan), Charlie Cojuangco (Negros Occidental), Gilbert Remulla (Cavite) and Michael John Duavit (Rizal).

Last week, Akbayan party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales said that while the Spice Boys in the 11th and 12th Congress were *mabango* (smelled nice) because they pushed for good programs, the Brat Pack stank because they were in a hurry to impeach Davide.

She described the Brat Pack as "children of rich families who are used to having their own ways without really working for it."

'Conjectures as facts'

Velarde said members of the Brat Pack were elected by the people to their position.

As such, he said, "they have their own minds; they know what they are supposed to do."

Intengan disagreed with the practice of name-calling.

"(This) is exactly what we are trying to correct. In Philippine politics, conjectures are presented as facts. [It] antagonizes the party and confuses the public," Intengan said.

Velarde agreed: "I would encourage everybody not to use judgmental words... The play of words is what [causes] some irritants in the process."

"The death and life of society is on the tip of [everyone's] tongue."

Conjoined RP twins suffer slight infection

From page A1

pact our long-term plans" for separating 18-month-old Carl and Clarence Aguirre, said Dr. David Staffenberg, chief of pediatric plastic surgery at Montefiore Medical Center's children's hospital.

The boys are joined at the top of their heads.

The expanders were inserted on Oct. 21 during the first of what was envisioned as three or four operations climaxing with the boys' separation.

The expanders are designed to stretch the twins' skin so there will be enough to cover both heads when they are separated.

The first expansion was scheduled for Nov. 10, but doctors noticed some liquid pooling around the plastic pouches beneath the scalp, according to hospital spokesperson Steve Osborne.

No choice

The doctors had no choice but to remove the expanders at Montefiore, Osborne said.

He said the brothers were doing "fine" after the operation.

The twins and their mother, Arlene Aguirre, were expected to return on Monday night to Blythedale Children's Hospital in Valhalla, where the boys have been undergoing physical and nutritional therapy to strengthen them for the surgeries to come and their separate lives afterward.

Because the twins are joined at the top of their heads, they cannot sit up, stand or even crawl.

Dr. James Goodrich, the hospital's director of pediatric neurosurgery, said in a statement that the next operation was tentatively scheduled for later this month.

But as he has said before, "The actual schedule will be determined by how Carl and Clarence are doing."

Doctors said the first operation, during which they removed a piece of skull and got their first direct look at the boys' brains and some shared blood vessels, went "absolutely smoothly."

Goodrich, the team leader, has said he decided against one marathon separation operation to help the boys adapt slowly to rerouted circulation systems and to avoid lengthy anesthesia and the risk of major blood loss.

Two-year-old twin boys from Egypt, who were separated in one 34-hour operation that ended Oct. 12, were upgraded to good condition last week at Children's Medical Center in Dallas. *AP*

GMA had dinner with JDV, Davide

From page A1

about the matter.

De Venecia said a solution to the crisis "could be in sight in the next 72 hours."

Peace of the brave

"We in the House could agree to a peace of the brave," he said, paraphrasing Charles de Gaulle.

He added: "We are agreeable to a truce. But it must be a truce among equals, nobody more supreme than the other."

In Tagbilaran City, Ms Macapagal told a multisectoral crowd assembled to mark the 107th birth anniversary of the late President Carlos Garcia that five basic principles put forth in the covenant would "ensure principled adherence to constitutional processes and strengthen democratic institutions."

She said the five principles were:

- "Respect [for] the supreme welfare of the people as defined by our Constitution and political traditions."
- "Affirmation of co-equality, independence but indispensable cooperation, and harmony" among the three branches of government.
- "Reinforcement of the principle of checks and balances as an instrument of national unity and stability, and not partisanship."
- Coming together of executive, legislative and judicial leaders as trustees of the public interest, and to find a resolution to the crisis "within the rule of law."
- "Democratic governance" based on all leaders' "mutual trust, respect, civility, responsibility and transparency."

She also announced these principles in Malacañang and in Calamba City.

Earnest consideration

In Malacañang, Ms Macapagal said she had given copies of the covenant, which she had made into a "formal document," to Davide, De Venecia and Senate President Franklin Drilon with a "request for earnest consideration."

"I have signified to them my willingness to sign the document together with the Speaker and the Chief Justice to affirm our tripartite commitment to the principles, precepts and procedures to resolve the impasse, with the Senate President as a witness," she said after attending the second of the planned eight-day Masses at the Palace.

The Masses are to end on Nov. 10, the day Congress resumes session. It is also on this day that the House plans to transmit the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate.

Ms Macapagal said De Venecia was in the process of consulting House members on the "letter and spirit of the covenant."

"I pray that my proposal will be considered by our leaders in the House, in the name of statesmanship and patriotism," she said.

The President said she had nothing in mind more than national unity and reconciliation.

"I believe that when the public interest calls for it, the presidency must never hesitate to use its moral influence to do right and to make the nation whole," she said, adding:

"I hear the voice of the people and it cries for healing and reconciliation. I shall heed this voice and respond to it. That is what I am forsworn to do as President."

Asked if the impeachment would no longer push through if Davide and De Venecia signed the covenant, Bunye said: "Definitely we can heave a sigh of relief."

No major objections

At his Makati residence yesterday morning, De Venecia presented the proposed covenant to the Liberal Party bloc of the pro-Davide Rep. Florencio Abad (Batanes).

Abad said in an interview that his party did not have major objections to the covenant, which, he noted, "restates the basic principles of our Constitution."

"Basically we're amenable to the covenant as it is written or worded," he said.

Sorsogon Rep. Francis Escudero, spokesperson of Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco's NPC, said the 63-member party welcomed all initiatives to work out a principled solution.

"Let us not be constrained by legalities and technicalities in our search for a solution," he said, but added that the Supreme Court would have to cooperate by allowing access to JDF records that even the Commission on Audit did not possess.

Escudero recalled that the COA itself had previously informed the House committee on justice, which conducted a probe into the fund, that there were records only the high court could provide Congress.

"If these records show that there are no problems with the way the JDF was utilized, then I don't think we in the House would have a problem with that," he said.

Not inflexible

Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio (NPC, South Cotabato) said: "We are not inflexible."

Custodio, who played a big role in the gathering of signatures for the Davide impeachment, said their party's bottom line was a clear and transparent review of the JDF, as supposedly demanded by court employees.

"There are things being considered," she said in reference to the covenant.

Endorsement

Drilon said he would "endorse" the covenant although the Senate was not involved in the controversy by virtue of its not having received the Articles of Impeachment.

"If [the matter] is settled before [the Articles] reach the Senate, then that should put the problem behind us," he told reporters at a press conference.

He expressed the belief that a settlement of the issue should be done in the House, "where the controversy started."

Confirm covenant

But to be binding on the judiciary, the Supreme Court must confirm the covenant through a full-court resolution, Drilon said. This will allow Davide, "if he is the signatory," to be duly authorized by the full court to sign it.

"There must be a concurrence of the entire court, as the Chief Justice is not the Supreme Court," Drilon said. "His action in this particular case must have the concurrence of the rest of the justices, especially since there are already petitions before the [high court].

Nothing political

But Sen. Joker Arroyo said the high court could never be party to a political settlement.

"When there's a political solution, it can only be a political solution between the executive and the legislature," he said. "They can make a political settlement, but the judiciary can never be part of a political settlement."

Arroyo said further that the executive and the legislature were the only political branches of government. "The judiciary is not a political department, therefore it cannot be party to a political solution."

Respect SC

He called on Malacañang and the House to respect the jurisdiction of the high court to settle the issue of constitutionality.

"I'm not saying that I want the impeachment process to [continue], he said. "I want the constitutional processes observed. What the Constitution says should be observed. That's all."

The administration senator insisted that the question over the constitutionality of the second impeachment complaint against Davide should be resolved by the high court.

Don't rush

"Once that is resolved, then perhaps we can proceed depending on what the Supreme Court decides," he said.

Arroyo also stressed that the tribunal should not be rushed to rule on the issue: "If it says it needs time, well, we have to respect that. Even the Senate cannot be rushed. When we are deliberating on certain bills, it takes time."

He said that with the oral arguments scheduled today before the high court, everyone should stop issuing statements. (*See story on Page A1.*)

"We should wait for the Supreme Court to make a decision on the cases pending before it. If we keep on discussing this, [we will] just keep repeating the same things over and over again," he said. ***With reports from Chito A. Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau; Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Philip Tubeza in Manila***

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

85 bodies recovered in Indon flood disaster

BAHOROK, Indonesia—Rescuers searching shattered homes in an Indonesian resort town had found 85 bodies by Tuesday afternoon but 100 people are still missing feared dead after a flood disaster linked to illegal logging.

Disaster relief coordinator Bonar Pasaribu said about 80 to 100 were still unaccounted for in this scenic North Sumatra town, where a wall of water struck late Sunday. He said relatives reported 133 missing, but up to 50 of they may have been out of town.

"We will try our hardest to find these people but the chance of them being alive is slim to none," Pasaribu said. One woman's body was found after being carried dozens of kilometers downstream, he said.

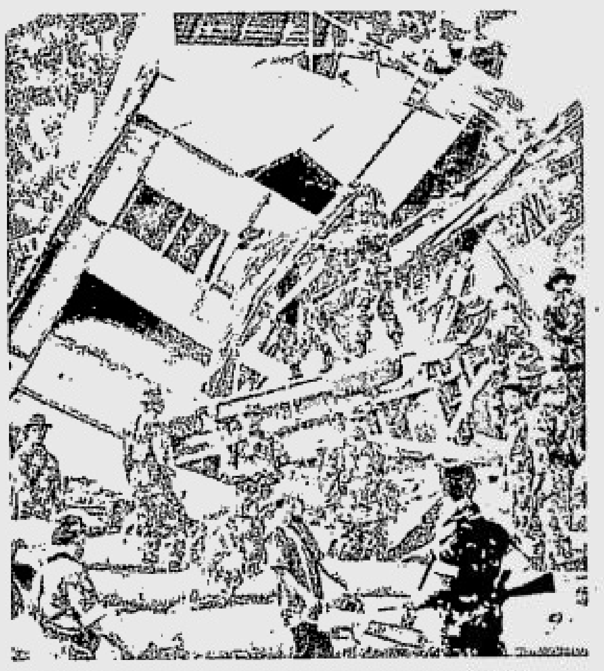
Two German women aged 20 and 26, a 63-year-old Singaporean male, a 30-year-old Dutchman and another 30-year-old man from Austria were among those killed when the flash flood hit the town on the banks of the Bahorok River.

Along with the surging floodwaters came hundreds of logs, felled on the slopes of nearby Gunung (Mount) Leuser national park and washed down the river.

They smashed into scores of homes, many of them tin-roofed bamboo structures, as well as resort cottages on the riverbank.

Pasaribu said about 450 homes or other structures were destroyed along with 35 resort cottages, two mosques and eight bridges.

Hundreds of Brimob paramilitary police and troops used chainsaws to clear huge logs and heavy equipment to remove motorbikes, cars and other debris, as the smell of rotting corpses hung faintly in the air. Police dogs were brought in to sniff for bodies.



SOLDIERS search for bodies in a North Sumatra village which was devastated by a flash flood caused by illegal logging. AP

Langkat district chief Syamsul Arifin said Monday the flood was caused by illegal logging in the national park and described it as a disaster waiting to happen.

"We know who the bosses and the thieves are. The victims are not only the environment but also humans. We have predicted this," Arifin said.

Bahorok, 96 km northwest of Medan, is on the eastern fringes of the park. It is the home of a famed orangutan refuge, which is popular with tourists who also go trekking and white-water rafting.

Enda Hartanta Bangun, an engineer with a state plantation company, said weeks of heavy rain were partly to blame.

Also, "the water buffer has been severely depleted due to illegal logging in Gunung Leuser. This is not a pure natural disaster," Bangun said.

The region is "very seriously damaged" by random logging, said Longgena Ginting, executive director of environmental group Walhi, in Jakarta.

Severe flooding and landslides, often blamed on deforestation or development of water catchment areas, are common during Indonesia's rainy season.

Residents said Bahorok was hit by floods every year but had never experienced anything like this week's devastation.

Headscarved women in the town sobbed quietly as they waited for news of loved ones.

Nur Rahma, 35, saw three of her children swept away. "I still hope my children are alive. I will keep looking till their bodies are found," she said, weeping.

Bodies were laid out in part of a mosque courtyard before being taken to a morgue in Medan. On the other side a shelter had been rigged up for the homeless.

Eight foreigners were evacuated to Medan and Binjai.

Some, like Californians Tom Donelly and Tyson Murphy, had miraculous escapes. *AFP*

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Iraq rebels launch more attacks; US soldier killed

BAGHDAD—Guerrillas mounted fresh attacks on occupation forces, firing mortars in the heart of the Iraqi capital and killing an American soldier near Tikrit, the US military said Tuesday.

No casualties or damage were reported when at least three mortars exploded at 9:15 p.m. Monday in central Baghdad, US officials said. One hit a US Army camp of the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, the officials said.

The American soldier who died near Tikrit was killed on Monday when his vehicle hit a land mine, US officials said. Another soldier was wounded. The death brought the US death toll in the first three days of November to 22, most in the weekend crash of a transport helicopter shot down west of Baghdad.

Elsewhere, a police station in the northern city of Mosul was struck overnight by a rocket-propelled grenade, the military said Tuesday. There were no casualties.

US troops raided the village of Karasia near Tikrit late Monday, seizing two suspects, Kalashnikov rifles, 14 mortar rounds, a mortar tube, and rocket-propelled grenades and launchers, the military said.

The dramatic increase in American hostile fire deaths this month was due to Sunday's downing of a CH-47 Chinook helicopter, which was carrying dozens of American soldiers on leave. Sixteen Americans died and another 20 were wounded.

It was the largest US death toll in any single action since the invasion of Iraq began March 20.

"Everybody was just laid out everywhere, and they were trying to search for most of the people that were left within the rubble," survivor Cpl. David Tennant told CBS. "There was a lot of people screaming. I just remember waking up in the middle of the rubble, trying to escape, trying to get out of the burning metal."

Sixteen of the injured were flown by US Air Force C-17 transport Monday to Ramstein Air Base in Germany and treated at the US military's Landstuhl Regional Medical Center. Nine were admitted to the intensive care unit, including five in serious condition, said hospital spokesperson Marie Shaw.

On Monday, Congress gave final approval for $87.5 billion to finance US military operations and aid in Iraq and Afghanistan. President George W. Bush was expected to sign the legislation soon. *AP*

US soldiers opened fire on this pickup in the town of Balad, killing six Iraqis. REUTERS

KUMARATUNGA

Sri Lanka plunged into crisis

COLOMBO—Sri Lanka President Chandrika Kumaratunga on Tuesday ordered troops to guard key installations including the state television station after she sacked the defense minister and two other key officials.

More than 100 troops were posted outside the government printing press with more soldiers at the state radio and television stations, officials said.

Sri Lanka's government was plunged into crisis and its peace process dealt a severe blow Tuesday when the president fired the defense, interior and media ministers, who have been working to coax Tamil rebels back into talks to end a 20-year civil war.

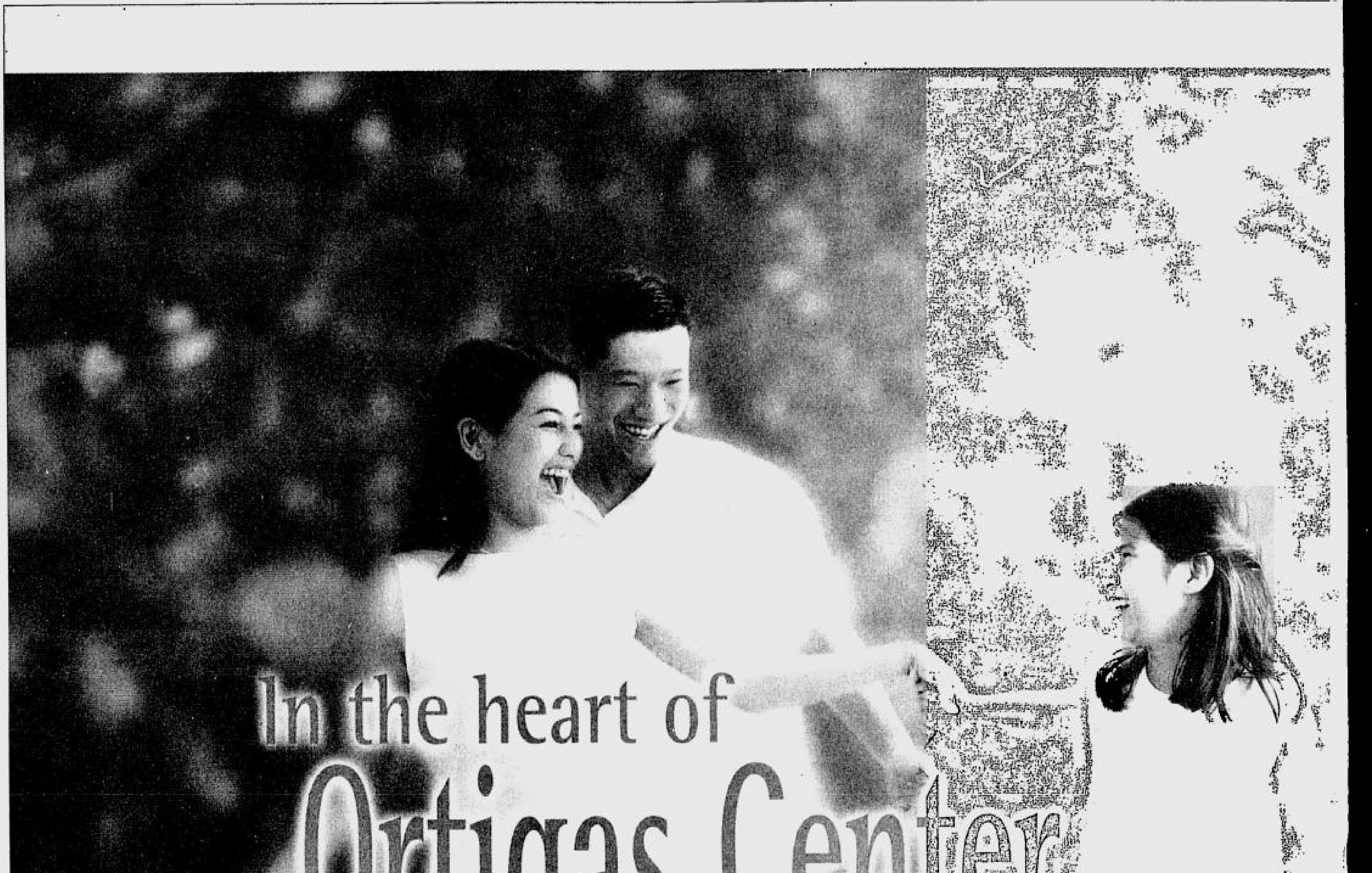
President Chandrika Kumaratunga — who has wide executive powers—has been severely critical of how the government of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has handled peace efforts with the Tamil Tiger rebels.

She argues the government has given too many concessions without ensuring that the Tigers abandon their armed struggle.

Kumaratunga's office said in statement that the steps were "taken after careful consideration in order to prevent further deterioration of the security situation in the country." It did not elaborate.

The shake-up came while her political rival, Wickremesinghe, was in Washington on an official visit. He was scheduled to meet US President George W. Bush Wednesday. Wickremesinghe and other Sri Lankan officials were holding a meeting in the US capital early Tuesday.

Defense Minister Tilak Marapone, Interior Minister John Amaratunga and Information Minister Imthiaz Bakeer Markar—who helped spearhead the fragile peace process—were removed from those posts Tuesday, spokesperson Giruka Perusinghe said. Three top aides to the ministers also were fired. *AP, AFP*



Sex tycoon forms own political party

BANGKOK—A sex industry tycoon, who calls himself an anti-corruption crusader, yesterday urged Thailand's public to support his newly formed political party.

Chuwit Kamolvisit, owner of several Bangkok massage parlors said to be fronts for prostitution, became a local hero in July when he publicly spoke out against police corruption, alleging he paid millions of dollars in bribes to officers.

Chuwit said he went public because police failed to prevent his prosecution in two criminal cases, even though he paid $300,000 in bribes every month for several years.

Chuwit's claims, backed only by circumstantial evidence, triggered a massive shake-up in Bangkok police echelons, with several top-ranking officials transferred to inactive posts.

On Tuesday, Chuwit took out a full-page advertisement in the Matichon daily newspaper with a picture of him smiling, his hands raised in victory. *AP*

Amnesty hits Thai drug carnage

BANGKOK—Human rights group Amnesty International has lambasted Thailand for failing to investigate the deaths of more than 2,000 people during the government's war on drugs.

The London-based group renewed calls for an investigation into the suspected killings, while accusing the Thai government of not protecting poor people, migrant workers and tribes people.

"Serious human rights violations and abuses have been taking place in Thailand (that) require serious attention by the authorities," Amnesty said in a statement released Monday to announce a report on conditions in the country.

Thailand has not allowed any independent investigation into the deaths of more than 2,000 suspected drug dealers, killed during a three-month crackdown launched by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra earlier this year, the report said.

The high death toll from the campaign, which ended in April, raised fears among human rights advocates and UN representatives that Thai police were carrying out extrajudicial killings.

The Thai government has dismissed the allegations of extrajudicial murder, insisting victims were killed in gangland turf wars.

Amnesty also said Thai authorities had not adequately investigated attacks against community leaders and activist groups that have protested against infrastructure projects they say would harm the environment and the livelihoods of villagers.

Activists have taken to the streets in recent years to demonstrate against government projects including a major dam and a proposed Thai-Malaysian gas pipeline. Last year, Thaksin ordered police to disperse protesters rallying against the pipeline. *AP*

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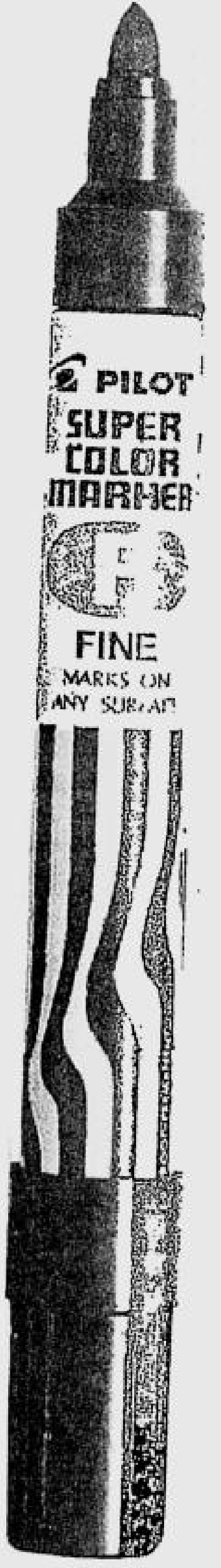

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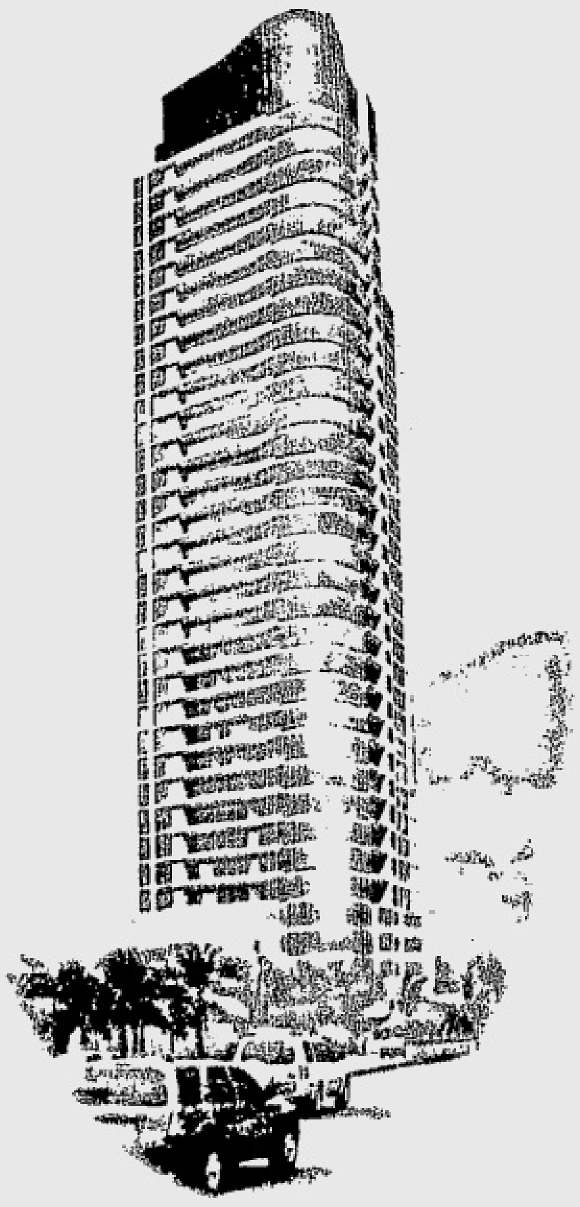

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Proof of sincerity

EDITORIAL

THE OFFER of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front to help the government track down some 40 Jemaah Islamiyah members hiding in Mindanao is a positive development that the Macapagal administration should welcome. If the MILF delivers on this pledge, it would be the first unmistakable signal that it is genuinely interested in finding a way to end the decades-old separatist war it has been waging against the government.

Past MILF pledges of cooperation in fighting criminal syndicates like kidnap-for-ransom gangs have not produced any concrete results until now. On the contrary, police and military officials routinely accuse the Moro rebels of providing sanctuary whenever they lose track of criminals belonging to notorious crime syndicates whose members profess the same Islamic faith. And if the same government sources are to be believed, the MILF does not limit its protection to local bandits and criminals but even international terrorists, particularly Jemaah Islamiyah operatives. JI, which is believed to have links to the al-Qaida international terrorist network of Osama bin Laden, seeks to establish a pan-Islamic enclave across Southeast Asia.

In one recent episode, the military said Fathur Roman al-Ghozi, the top JI operative in the Philippines, was able to elude capture for so long after his escape from his detention cell in Camp Crame because he was being hidden by some local MILF commanders. (He was killed at a joint military and police checkpoint in South Cotabato early last month.) More recently, Taufek Refke, the suspected JI paymaster in the Philippines and the next in rank to Al-Ghozi, was said to have admitted that JI was still getting limited assistance from the MILF. Refke, who was captured last month, has reportedly told his interrogators that the MILF was providing guides and bodyguards to JI members unlike before when the separatist group would provide them safe houses.

Military officials had earlier accused the MILF of providing facilities for terrorist training to JI operatives, most of whom are Indonesians. One of the biggest of these training schools was said to be located in Camp Abubakar, the MILF stronghold that was overrun by government forces three years ago. And some government officials continue to insist that the links between the Philippine secessionist group and the international terrorist organization have not been completely severed until this day.

These charges have been vigorously denied by the MILF, which has disavowed any connections with JI. In June this year, just weeks before his death, MILF chair Salamat Hashim issued a statement branding terrorism as "anathema to the teachings of Islam." Responding to President Macapagal-Arroyo's call for him to denounce terrorism as a precondition for the resumption of peace negotiations, Hashim said: "I hereby reiterate our condemnation and abhorrence of terrorist tendencies. Consequently, we reject and deny any link with terrorist organizations or activities in this part of the Asian region." Salamat was also said to have written in a similar vein to US President Geoge W. Bush.

All these assurances have not squelched suspicions of continued MILF collusion with JI. The revelations of people like Refke actually open it to accusations of duplicity.

What can help build confidence and restore the government's trust in the MILF is a sincere effort to help crush the threat of terrorism such as what the secessionist group is offering now. A round-up of the 40 suspected JI operatives should produce a dramatic shift in the way even government hard-liners perceive the MILF and create a condition of confidence and cooperation that could produce a final peace agreement. If the MILF can do it, it should go for it.

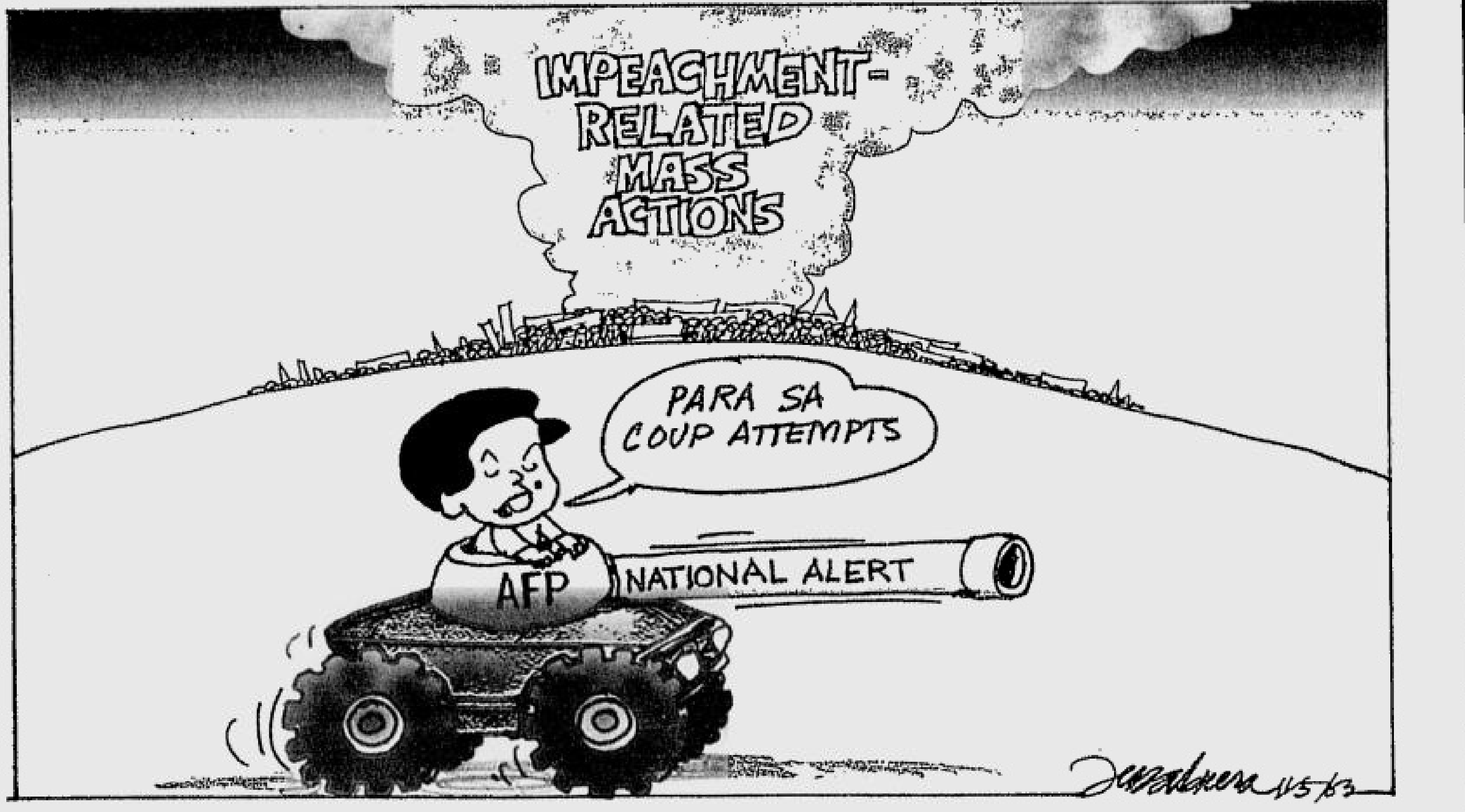
Israel's nukes

FOREIGN COMMENT

ALTHOUGH it has neither denied nor confirmed suspicions about its unlawful activities, Israel is widely believed to have 200 to 300 nuclear warheads. The Jewish state has not ratified the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Likewise, it adamantly refuses to open its nuclear installations to international inspections. Nonetheless, no tough warning has been made to Israel to come clean on its nuclear program. The United States, which is spearheading a high-profile drive for global denuclearization, has yet to pressure its protégé to fall into line.

Allowing Israel to keep the lid on its highly suspicious nuclear program and spurn bids to uncover it confirms the rife notion in the Middle East that the Jewish state is a law unto itself.

Egyptian Gazette (Cairo, Egypt)



Too much extravagance, wastage in gov't

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

SO where's our money? court employees ask. Yes, indeed, if the disbursements of the Judiciary Development Fund is in order, as anti-impeachment Rep. Florencio Abad and Etta Rosales insist, why do the court employees think they're being paid less now when court fees have been raised and the JDF is getting bigger? Under Presidential Decree 1949 that created the JDF, court employees are supposed to get 80 percent and the Supreme Court 20 percent of the fund. So where did the money go? The employees suspect they got less than the 80 percent. The pro-impeachment congressmen think so, too.

In fact, that's the purported reason for the impeachment complaint—so that the Supreme Court will open its book of accounts and explain the disbursements. That's not hard to do if everything is in order, *'di ba*? But instead of explaining, all the efforts of pro-Davide groups are to abort the impeachment trial. Ironically, that is the venue where all the accusations of the congressmen can be convincingly proven false. So I don't understand why they don't want it.

I also do not understand why Abad and Rosales are doing the explaining but not the Chief Justice nor his son Bryan when they were the ones who authorized the purchases and the expenses and who should be the ones to know exactly where the money went. Abad and Rosales were using in-house Commission on Audit reports to defend Davide—and this I also do not understand—but the congressmen who impeached Davide also cite the same COA report to justify their charges. So which is which? Did the COA give its imprimatur to the Supreme Court expenses or did it cite some discrepancies? And why is the COA so silent? Wouldn't a formal hearing—not necessarily a trial—and investigation clarify these mysteries?

The legions of lawyers arguing the impeachment case all cite legal technicalities why no impeachment trial should take place—the second complaint is unconstitutional, there were not enough signatures to the complaint itself, only to the endorsements, etc. etc. But nobody cites the heaven-and-hell difference between the lavishly renovated and refurnished Supreme Court and the many dilapidated courtrooms with broken-down furniture, no typewriters and air conditioning. In fact, some judges have no salas at all and borrow the salas of other judges to conduct trials. Yes, some courtrooms are like classrooms that hold morning, afternoon and sometimes even evening classes.

Nobody bothers to explain why the people have to buy the justices with luxury vehicles when they already have two or more vehicles of their own. And why luxury vehicles when the ordinary ones, which are cheaper, can go to the same places that the luxury versions can. They don't have to go to many places either like public works engineers who inspect far-flung projects. Policemen need transportation to be able to respond to emergencies quickly, but it is they who are assigned few and dilapidated vehicles. But board members of government institutions who go from house to office for board meetings only once a month, are given brand-new luxury vehicles, which become their very own properties after a few years.

People don't realize it, but the reason we have traffic jams is because there are too many vehicles, and one reason there are too many is that the government gives too many free vehicles to its officials, courtesy of the taxpayers who have to content themselves with taking buses and jeepneys that get caught in traffic jams caused by too many vehicles.

When an official has only one car, he contributes only one car to the daily traffic. If he has bodyguards, they share that car with him. But when he has two or more vehicles, his bodyguards use these vehicles, thus adding more vehicles to the traffic. The taxpayers pay not only for these extra vehicles but also for their drivers, gasoline, oil, tires and maintenance. The money spent for them could have been used instead for more classrooms, more health centers, more homes for the homeless, more kilometers of roads, etc.

When my father was a Cabinet member in the administration of President Carlos P. Garcia, he rode a bus to his office. When he was told he should have a car, he bought an old second-hand car. His secretaries and clerks rode with him in that car to and from the office. Now, the secretaries have their own vehicles, and Cabinet members and lesser officials are escorted with van-loads of bodyguards.

What am I driving at? That there is so much extravagance and wastage in the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo while the needed things cannot be constructed and bought because there is not enough money. That is why the government deficit and the public debts keep getting bigger.

Ironically, when her father, Diosdado Macapagal, became president, one of the first things he did was declare an austerity program. He and his First Lady led by example. They wore the cheap "*pagasa*" cloth and urged the people to do the same thing.

The President introduced the long-sleeved polo shirt, which is cheaper and more durable than the barong tagalog. It looks as good or even better than the barong, too. We would be saving a lot of money if we followed the old Macapagal's example. No doubt an austerity program similar to his would trim both the budget deficit and the public debt.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: Even the Muslims support Chief Justice Hilario Davide. Everywhere you go where the Muslims are—Greenhills, Quiapo, Divisoria, Baclaran—they whisper to passing shoppers: DVD, DVD, DVD.

Widening gyre

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

(Conclusion)

IT may seem the strangest thing to say, Erap and GMA being spun from the same cloth. On the face of it, no two people could be more different.

Erap was lazy, waking up at noon, after a night of wild carousing, barely able to comprehend things for reasons that went beyond a hangover. GMA is indefatigable, waking up at crack of dawn eager to start her day, preferably in the provinces. Erap had an IQ that could be counted by the number of his mistresses. GMA has an IQ that can be counted by the cost of the Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard. Erap was a movie star, GMA was an economist. Erap loved to drink, GMA loves power. Erap was indulgent, and committed all the cardinal sins every day, GMA is abstemious and commits herself only to Cardinal Sin's—and Cory's—personal beliefs. Erap liked the company of *barkada*, GMA likes the company of George Bush.

But stark as these differences are, they are in the end superficial. Leadership-wise, Erap and GMA share one very fundamental trait: They are both, for lack of a better word, populist.

By populist, I mean someone who panders to the public. I mean someone who takes the safe side and steers clear of controversy, who exploits the people's ignorance and prejudices, who bends this way and that for personal benefit. The opposite of a populist leader is someone who commits to a cause and sticks by it, who tries to educate the public or at least wean it of its biases (chief of them, our anti-Moro one), who does not bow to adversity or compromise with tyranny.

Erap was populist because he knew no better. He spent his whole life pleasing the public. In the movies, he played the loveable rogue, the *siga* from a tough neighborhood who fought his way out of it with his fists and a heart of gold. In life, and particularly in Malacañang, he tried to play the same role, but alas (for him), the (tax)paying patrons woke up to find him only a rogue, and not a very lovable one.

I tried to warn my friends about the dangers of populism when they tried to convince me to support Erap in 1998. They argued that since Erap was a simpleton, they could influence him to take the progressive path. I said Claro M. Recto and Jose Laurel tried the same tack with Magsaysay in 1953. They argued that since Magsaysay was a simpleton, they could steer him into the nationalist path. Alas, the problem with simpletons is that they do not become popular by standing their ground, they became so by taking the line of least resistance. Rather than becoming a nationalist, Magsaysay became the biggest American boy this country had ever seen. Rather than the progressives driving Erap into the progressive path, Erap drove the progressives into the path to perdition.

GMA's predilection for pandering to the public was patent from the start. Or at least when she discovered that the path to power lay not in projecting herself as another Diosdado Macapagal but as another Nora Aunor. When she tried the first, she landed among the last when she ran for senator in 1992. When she tried the second, complete with Regal- or Viva-like posters, she landed first in 1995. That has been her trajectory ever since.

I criticized that approach from the start for the same reason: A populist leader will always take the line of least resistance.

That is exactly what has happened. To this day, GMA has not made a single decision that stands to make her unpopular, or controversial. She has not punished any of the Erap people who goaded the mob at "Edsa III" to riot in Mendiola (Miriam Santiago even dared the authorities to arrest her while doing a Rambo); she has not punished a single mutineer at Oakwood; she has not even punished Erap himself, which her being shoved in his place mandates her to do.

Even her seemingly aggressive stance in the "war against terror" comes from the premise that it is popular in this country. A completely correct reading, as I've gathered myself from the reactions of readers since 9/11. And which is borne out by a recent SWS survey that shows Bush to have a more than 50 percent approval rating in this country. It's no longer so even in the United States. The "war against terror" also exploits two particularly powerful prejudices in this country—our pro-Americanism and anti-Moro sentiment. No, that tack falls squarely into GMA's populist thrust.

That is also why I dread an FPJ presidency. It is not that he has no experience, it is not that he is a movie star, it is not that he may become corrupt like Erap. It is that he too has spent his whole life pleasing the public. That should be obvious from the fact that neither his character nor his formula changes in his movies. Why should they do so when he becomes president? People who become famous by taking the line of least resistance will continue to take the line of least resistance when they become powerful.

Contrast all this with what's happened in Malaysia. You may not always like Mahathir Mohamad, particularly for jailing Anwar Ibrahim on trumped-up charges of corruption. But you have to admire his refusal to bow down to WTO-type "globalization" long before it was fashionable to do so, which was probably what saved his country from the 1997 Asian crisis. You have to admire his rallying the more than 100 non-aligned countries to oppose the war in Iraq and becoming their virtual spokesperson. You have to admire his determination to turn Malaysia into one of the region's most developed countries.

That is the opposite of a populist leader, someone who has a vision and sticks to it, someone who does not bow to adversity or great odds and tries to please everyone.

That is what we need, albeit one with more libertarian instincts. I can only hope that happens before the gyre widens even more frightfully, spinning us round and round, faster and faster, never to cling to anything solid again.

Brutal oligarchy on the rampage

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE IMPEACHMENT of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. initiated by a bloc of congressmen associated with Eduardo M. Cojuangco's Nationalist People's Coalition, represents the emergence of a new dynastic oligarchy that has used its toehold in the House of Representatives to mount an assault on the Court.

With only 54 members in the 226-member House, NPC members constitute the bulk of the more than 90 congressmen who signed the Articles of Impeachment. The fact that this minority bloc became the gravitational pole of this unprecedented attack on the Court, plunging the country into its most incendiary constitutional crisis since independence, is evidence of the political power of this resurgent oligarchy, built on dynastic family rule.

The impeachment complaint was spearheaded by two sons of Cojuangco, and a nephew who is a key leader of the NPC and was backed by several other political dynastic families, among them the Fuentebellas of Camarines Sur, the Remullas of Cavite and the Escuderos of Sorsogon.

The Cojuangco new-generation dynasty did not even have the subtlety of hiding their hands in silk gloves. They pushed the move with a coat of mail, the most blatant power play ever seen in Congress, historically the arena for the recurrent struggle for power centered on either the House or the Senate.

Dynastic power play has been a bane of Philippine politics, but this time the demonstration of this power of dynasties embedded in Congress is focused not on the presidency or among rival factions in the legislature, but on the Supreme Court, the most passive of the three cornerstones of Philippine democracy.

The ability of dynastic families to put their surrogate kin in the commanding heights of the organs of state power has been facilitated by the extremely expensive Filipino elections and is based on the wealth accumulated through business expansion or rents provided by control of political power or access to election financing through public funds (i.e., pork barrel). Over time, the number of relatives of congressmen succeeding themselves in the House or Senate has increased rather than decreased.

What's new is that this new breed of young dynasts is less inhibited in flexing political power. The most recent evidence of this muscle-flexing as a weapon of political blackmail is the threat aired by NPC congressmen that they would scuttle the NPC-Lakas coalition and unseat Speaker Jose de Venecia if he pushed his plan to block the transmittal of the complaint to the Senate. This threat points a gun to the head of the majority coalition, and to the Macapagal administration itself, as the President faces a critical stage of the 2004 elections and the collapse of this coalition could only damage her electoral chances. The President is the repository of state powers and for her to be intimidated by junior coalition partners reflects her inadequacy in standing up to blackmail and invites the contempt of the Filipino people.

The impeachment complaint was signed after the talks between the President and Cojuangco collapsed. A President who cowers in the face of the thuggery of dynastic political warlords like the Cojuangcos, Remullas and Fuentebellas does not deserve to be President and should instead retire as a lackey and "*encargado*" of the Cojuangcos who have made nearly all of Negros Occidental their modern baronial domain by expanding their landholdings, unequalled by any sugar baron of the past through the circumvention of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law in the guise of corporate agro-business lease contracts.

The brash Cojuangco surrogates embedded in the House rammed the complaint through the House after their patriarch had lost a series of cases with the Supreme Court, the latest of which involved Cojuangco's control of his interests in San Miguel Corp. Since Cojuangco has no direct clash with the President over his extensive business interests, the President has been spared as the target of his attack. Cojuangco has more compelling reasons to aim at the Supreme Court, and the attack on the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court has shafted his and the Court's integrity with corruption charges, erosion of which could diminish the Court's credibility in ruling on many of the cases still pending. Since Cojuangco has little chance of winning as president to protect his interests, and his alliance with Ms Macapagal didn't push through, the Court is the only state institution he has not infiltrated (he has already penetrated the House) and the only nemesis standing in the way of his economic interests.

To be sure, during the more genteel days of Philippine politics, the oligarchy whether based on land, industry and manufacturing, was embedded in the legislature and intervened in the power struggles over the presidency. For example, the Lopez oligarchy penetrated both the legislative and executive departments by forging political alliances within the framework of the two-party system. The power of the co-called "sugar bloc," through which the Lopez oligarchy shaped policies and executive decisions on key economic issues, is legendary. But the Lopez oligarchy did not flaunt their political power blatantly and kept themselves discreetly in the background.

By contrast, the Cojuangco oligarchy has brutally launched, like the political warlords of the 1950s and 1960s, through its NPC hitmen, a devastating attack on the Supreme Court. This oligarchy has captured the gun emplacements of the legislature.

War, sex and the US military

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

FROM THE LATEST issue of "We!" a publication of Isis International, comes a report on the "alarming" increase in the incidence of abduction and rape of girls and young women in post-war Iraq. A report released by the US-based group Human Rights Watch notes that the number of reported rapes and abductions in Iraq has increased since after the war, with the report blaming the outbreak of anarchy on the streets after the US takeover as a "major factor" in the increase of crimes against women and children.

The breakdown of Iraqi government structures and authority has also made it difficult to quantify criminal activity, the report said, while the lack of law enforcers' presence on the streets "encourage Iraqi criminals to carry on with their plans."

The report was based on more than 70 interviews with law enforcement officials, victims and their families, medical personnel and members of the coalition authority. Human Rights Watch found 25 "credible" reports of abduction and sexual violence since the war ended. But people interviewed in Baghdad said they believe there are more undocumented cases since the stigma attached to rape makes it extremely difficult for victims and their families to report the crime.

Existing biases against rape survivors in Iraqi society also contribute to the problem, the report states. "This is because traditional notions of honor are upheld and the sense of shame in (the victims') families is so strong that victims are further punished for 'humiliating' the family."

It was reported that fathers or brothers often beat women who have been raped or abducted, "as if the crime was the women's doing." There have even been documented cases of male family members killing the victimized women for the sake of "family honor." Even seeking medical aid and police assistance is frowned upon as this would further shame the family.

* * *

HUMAN Rights Watch says the problem has caused panic among many Iraqi families, and the report says family members have taken to dropping off their daughters at school then waiting for them outside the premises until dismissal. "Families are afraid their girls will be abducted and raped if they are not guarded all the time," the report notes. "Girls are also prohibited from going out of the house alone."

Hanny Megally, executive director of the Middle East and North Africa division of Human Rights Watch, said this new panic should also be a cause of alarm for women helping rebuild post-war Iraq. "Women and girls today in Baghdad are scared, and many are not going to schools or jobs or looking for work. If Iraqi women are to participate in post-war society, their physical security needs to be an urgent priority."

* * *

IT seems a forlorn hope, though, that the American occupying forces and Iraqi transitional authority would give priority to the safety or welfare of Iraqi girls and women. Not if we judge by the policies adopted by the US military, even, or especially in overseas postings.

The same issue of "We!" also carries a report on the global campaign recently launched by the group "Equality Now" against the sexual exploitation of women by US military forces in South Korea and around the world.

Last June, Equality Now launched this call to urge US President George W. Bush and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld "to establish and strictly enforce a zero-tolerance policy prohibiting the solicitation of prostitution by US military forces around the world."

"Almost everywhere US troops are stationed, there is a dramatic growth of the local commercial sex industry," Equality Now said. "Increased demand for prostitution compounds the abuse of women, many of whom are trafficked to supply this demand. In South Korea, military personnel condone prostitution and support the trafficking industry despite the fact that solicitation of prostitution is an offence under Korean law and under the US Forces, Korea Regulation, which states that 'all houses of prostitution' are formally 'off-limits' to military personnel."

A bi-partisan group of 13 members of the US Congress wrote Secretary Rumsfeld in May last year demanding the immediate investigation by the Defense Department of the situation in South Korea, a demand echoed some months later by Equality Now. The group "expressed concern that involvement in prostitution demonstrates a profound disrespect for women and causes deep public resentment in the host country."

The Pentagon has reportedly undertaken an inquiry, but no findings have been released, says Equality Now. And so far, no American serviceman has been held accountable for solicitation of prostitution in South Korea or elsewhere in recent times.

* * *

THIS is an issue that likewise affects Filipinos, even if we have long said goodbye to permanent US bases in the Philippines, though not yet to visiting American forces.

For one, a study released by the Coalition against Trafficking of Women reveals that Filipinas are being trafficked for purposes of prostitution in South Korea, working in bars that cater mainly to American troops. For another, while the bases are gone, the bars, discos and brothels remain. In Angeles, the honky-tonk district that sprung up around the former Clark Air Base has been transformed into a strip catering to foreign male tourists, for whom the area has acquired the reputation as a "Disneyland for sex."

While formal sanctions against soliciting for prostitution for the US armed services may help curtail the trade, there's still a long way to go before the sense of male entitlement for sexual pleasure—by way of paid or coerced sex—is dented or eradicated.

Del Pilar's bones

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

AS most people are still fresh from their annual visit to the cemetery, we might as well provide some details of the examination of Gregorio del Pilar's remains by Dr. Sixto de los Angeles in 1930. Dr. De los Angeles was the same medico-legal expert who examined the supposed remains of Andres Bonifacio, exhumed from Cavite before the war. Identification of the alleged Bonifacio bones was inconclusive yet a government panel declared the bones authentic. The Bonifacio bones disappeared and have not been seen since. My theory is that these would not have withstood close scrutiny and are definitely not the bones of the Supremo of the Katipunan who still lies somewhere in the Maragondon range.

My take on the above is the core of my book "Bones of Contention" (Anvil, 2001), furthermore, Dr. Quintin Oropilla of the Makati Medical Center calculated the height of the person examined and it is less than five feet. Nobody would like to accept that Bonifacio was of low stature—both literally and figuratively—so I concluded that the Bonifacio bones were fake. In the case of Gregorio del Pilar, the remains, while incomplete, provided some individual peculiarities that made the identification conclusive. Most of the supporting data, as I mentioned in last week's column, had something to do with Del Pilar's teeth.

De los Angeles, after a thorough study of 73 pieces of bones and 33 teeth, concluded that the remains found belonged to a Filipino male, 20 to 25 years of age. Based on the bones, he calculated the height of the man at around 165 cm. Circumference of the head, 52.5 cm. One of the general's uniforms and caps fit the reconstructed skeleton. De los Angeles further stated that deterioration of the bones suggested that the corpse had been buried for about 30 years in the same ground where it was found.

History records show that Del Pilar died of a gunshot wound but De los Angeles could not confirm this except to guess based on "fractures of the mandible and base and the left side of the skull, and the corresponding secondary lacerations of the brain substance." Only one button fashioned from a bone was found with the remains, thus confirming the eyewitness report that American soldiers stripped Del Pilar of his uniform and accessories and kept these as souvenirs or war booty. He was buried with his underwear as none of the soldiers was willing to take this home. Del Pilar's whistle has since been returned to the Philippines and like the Balangiga bells we await the rest of his effects.

Peculiarities regarding Del Pilar's teeth were, "irregular growth of the lower teeth; the slightly protruded lower jaw, the asymmetrical appearance of the lower part of the face; the gold filling at the right superior central incisor, the existence of multiple dental caries..." In summary:

1. "Protrusion of the mandible and of its corresponding dental arch, inferable and shown by the fact that the free borders of the superior teeth articulate and rest anteriorly on the free borders of the lower anterior teeth.

2. "Solid, white and medium-sized teeth, with signs of erosions, limited to the sharp points of the grinding surface of the molars, and absence of erosion on the third molars or wisdom teeth.

3. "Relatively preserved natural sharpness of the cutting edges of the right canines and first pre-molars, both superior and inferior, due to the relatively more internal deviations or locations of the corresponding lower teeth; thus forming in respect a remarkable contrast with the similar teeth of the left side, particularly the left inferior canine which appeared twisted and deviated backward to the left. As a natural sequela from such dental deviations, the inferior dental arch exhibited an asymmetrical and deformed appearance, forming at the left side narrower and a more salient angle forward; while at the right the same dental arch appeared to be depressed backward and internally.

4. "Presence of the supernumerary tooth (found among the teeth) with its corresponding points of adjustment at the front of and somewhat below the inferior canine and first pre-molar at the left side.

5. "Left upper lateral incisor thicker than its pair at the right and concave and rough at its posterior or oral surface, indicating previous connection with another supernumerary tooth not found among the remains examined.

6. "Right central upper incisor having a gold filling of 2.5 x 2 in diameter at the middle of the internal border.

7. "Presence of dental caries at the first right molars, both upper and lower; first upper left pre-molar; left lower canine; second pre-molar, and the root of the supernumerary tooth found; that affecting the first lower molar at the right being the deepest and largest.

8. "Greater degree of erosions of the free borders of the left teeth, indicating habitual grinding of food at this side."

In 1897 Del Pilar was in Hong Kong where he had his supernumerary tooth extracted and had one tooth filled with gold. While this was enough to identify the remains, the old data poses new questions. Del Pilar had two extra teeth, he needed braces to correct crooked growth, and usually ate food on the left side. Surely all this will tell us more than that outlined in our textbooks.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

'Pak Lah's' own style

EYE ON ASIA

Karim Raslan

MALAYSIA'S newly installed prime minister, Abdullah Badawi—is not the most exciting man in the world. His understated, gentlemanly ways seem out of place in present-day Kuala Lumpur with its ranks of Nokia-toting businessmen and deal-makers.

While many Malaysians will miss Dr. Mahathir Mohamad's high-adrenalin ways, Abdullah Badawi (called affectionately Pak Lah or Uncle Lah) is a steady and unflappable presence. After 22 years of the good doctor's rule, Abdullah Badawi will act as a conciliator—as a soothing balm—for a country still grappling with the pressures of rapid globalization and urbanization.

Certainly Pak Lah must address the growing chasm in people's private lives as the balance between spirituality and ethics on the one hand and governance and business swings wildly out of control. The perceived moral vacuum in public life and the growing resentment of those excluded from commercial activity has fueled the opposition Islamic party, Parti SeIslam Malaysia's (or PAS) dramatic rise. In this context, as the scion of a respected family of Islamic scholars, Abdullah Badawi is well positioned to tackle the all-powerful ullama head-on.

Fortunately, Abdullah Badawi's diffidence masks a surprising breadth of experience both as a civil servant and a politician. Quite apart from his exposure at the highest levels of Malaysian politics (he was foreign minister for over eight years), he has also seen the country at its very lowest point, serving as the secretary of the National Operations Council—the body set up to rule Malaysia in the aftermath of the country's bloodiest racial outburst in May 1969.

Having grown up on the cosmopolitan island of Penang, he also has an intuitive understanding of the delicacy of Malaysia's racial make-up (the country's 23 million population is comprised of Malay/Muslims who are the majority with 55 percent, Chinese 32 percent, Indian 8 percent). Moreover, he recognizes the need to balance reform and renewal with the country's innate conservatism.

Pak Lah knows—without having to be told—that in Malaysia change takes place in an evolutionary manner—slowly and steadily. Ordinary Malaysians recoil from revolutionary ideas and policies—a fear of instability unifies the entire nation. People Power and Edsa are unimaginable in Kuala Lumpur: the Malaysian *massa* in their suburban homes with their Proton cars are just too comfortable.

There are five main issues that he must tackle in order to start his administration on a firm footing and ensure a thumping victory in the next election that must be called before November 2004.

Firstly, Malaysians value law and order. They are distressed by the mounting number of reports of petty crime and the perceived inability of the police to cope with these challenges—many of which are linked to the country's two million plus expatriate population of Indonesians, Bangladeshis, Filipinos, Vietnamese and Thais.

Secondly, and this is inter-connected, there is a sense that corruption and cronyism, while curbed has by no means been halted. The continuing prevalence of corruption—especially in high places depresses and horrifies all Malaysians—it undermines the element of trust that exists between the electorate and their elected representatives fueling resentment and anger. However, Abdullah Badawi's limited experience in economic matters is troubling because he will have to stave off the carpetbaggers and rent-seekers.

Thirdly, Abdullah Badawi must reassess the country's strident foreign policy especially given Malaysia's enormous US$125-billion worth of international trade. Given his self-effacing nature, there is no doubt that Malaysia's international profile will be lessened because in the corridors of diplomacy, style is substance. Moreover, the international media will find him a far less colorful character to cover and in time his currency as a news-maker will diminish.

Interestingly, I envisage that the shift in atmospherics at least with the United States will take place without Malaysia having to alter its stated foreign policy principles. An embattled President George W. Bush will be forced to reach out to moderate Muslim nations as he seeks to extricate the "hyper-power" from its self-imposed Iraqi quagmire.

Fourthly, while current economics are extremely positive, the nation desperately needs a period of economic consolidation. A combination of soaring petroleum and oil palm prices, an up-tick in US demand and the Chinese manufacturing dynamo have boosted domestic commercial activity. However the country must slow down and recover from the extraordinary velocity and dynamism of Mahathir's tenure as prime minister.

Malaysians must also digest the economic growth and take stock of the massive infrastructural and industrial projects including a new administrative capital at Putrajaya, the multibillion-dollar Bakun Dam in Sarawak, the Proton car project not to mention the many hundreds of kilometers of tollways criss-crossing the country, the ports and airports.

Moreover, Pak Lah must reassess the effectiveness, efficiency and profitability of these projects. With the hardware installed, we must figure out how to develop the software to take advantage of the infrastructure. Questions also have to be asked about Malaysia's future given China's growing economic might.

Is Malaysia going to become little more than a resource-rich, Caribbean-type playground for middle-class Chinese tourists? The current anemic levels of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) are forcing us to consider alternative economic models. Has Thailand Prime Minister's Thaksin discovered the new engine for growth with his domestic demand driven model?

For the time being, most of Mahathir's policies will remain unchanged. In fact there will be very little in the way of alterations until the new prime minister has secured his own electoral mandate. It goes without saying that Pak Lah must—if he is to wield power confidently, deliver a thumping electoral victory. He must redeem his government's lackluster 1999 electoral performance, the first after Anwar Ibrahim's ouster in which Mahathir suffered a substantial popular setback.

Patience and self-restraint have long been the hallmarks of Abdullah Badawi's career. While he will accord Mahathir the highest respect, there is no doubt that his pragmatism will rule the day. As the challenges facing Malaysia shift and change, he will respond in kind—altering the good doctor's previous policy prescriptions if need be.

Still, a combination of commonsense and a low-key temperament will minimize the differences between Pak Lah and his predecessor. But at the end of the day, Pak Lah will be his own man. He will act when he needs to and strike hard against those that challenge the security of the state and or the country's painstakingly wrought multi-racial balance. In the months to come we will begin to see his determination and intransigence as he becomes more comfortable with the mantle of power and the premiership.

'Win-win' solution is no win for the Supreme Court

BEING impeached is not the end of the world. Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. should be the first to realize this—having come from the legislature once upon a time and having cut his teeth in the arena of political horse-trading that is the Congress of the Philippines. It is simply a political tool used by desperate characters who, not being able to persuade anyone with their arguments, will resort to the ultimate trump card—the tyranny of numbers and not necessarily the majesty of truth. If you have the truth on your side (not necessarily a large horde of people, for people can be bought, coerced, fooled but the truth will never change), as Chief Justice Davide appears to have, then he should not fear an impeachment trial.

The worst thing that can happen to the Supreme Court is for the institution itself to engage in political horse-trading, such as that which is now being brokered by the ultimate *trapo*, Jose de Venecia, under the guise of a "win-win" solution. If De Venecia's terms are to believed—the Court recognizes Congress' oversight powers and Congress respects the Court's fiscal autonomy but the Court allows its Judiciary Development Fund books to be opened, in violation of the law that vests the Chief Justice with the sole prerogative to dispense the funds—then the Supreme Court would have entered into a no-win compromise that ultimately destroys the institution of the Court even as it may "save" the Chief Justice. A deal between the Court and Congress to spare the Chief Justice will lead to other deals—less noble, less transparent, more oppressive, more evil. The line must be drawn clearly—right-lined in scarlet, as a justice would put it: no deals, Mr. Speaker.

The Supreme Court, as an institution, cannot and should not enter into any compromises—under any terms, under any conditions, for any reasons. While Chief Justice Davide, as an individual, may choose to "compromise" so that he can be saved from the spectacle of an impeachment trial, he cannot and should not allow the institution itself to enter into a compromise; should the Chief Justice wish to ensure that he will not stand trial, then that is a personal decision he must make but he cannot and should not allow the Court itself, as an institution, to have any part in a politically brokered deal.

Justice is not for sale, neither should it appear to be for sale. Not for any price, for any consideration; not for anybody's sake.

While Chief Justice Davide may personally be a man of integrity and of great moral courage, he is not indispensable. The Court he leads, however, is indispensable. The country right now needs a strong Supreme Court—strong in moral courage, strong in integrity, strong in principle, strong in leadership. The country right now needs its conscience. A Chief Justice filled with integrity and moral courage facing a clearly politically motivated impeachment trial, where he is confident of being exonerated, may be the shot in the arm our so-called democracy needs—to restore faith and confidence in the one unshakeable institution that must possess integrity—the Court itself.

—THEODORE O. TE,
Sanidad Abaya Te Viterbo
Enriquez & Tan,
66 Timog Avenue, Quezon City

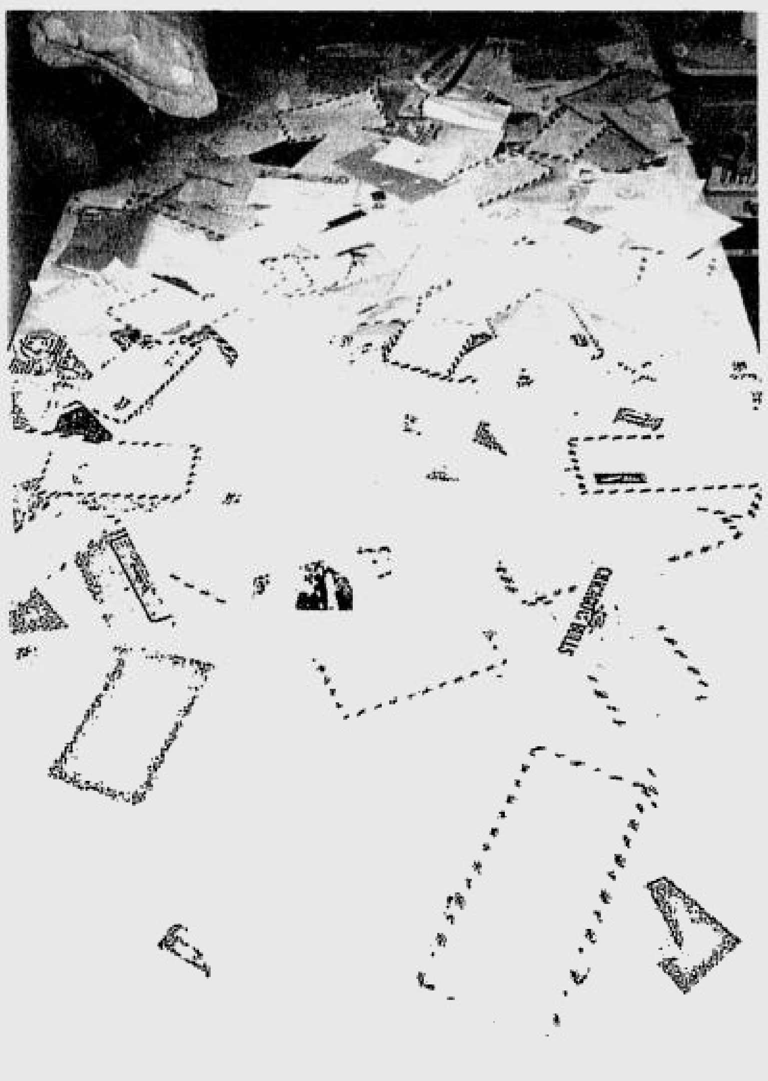
LETTERS PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Old issue

IN CONNECTION with Bernardo Lopez's commentary titled "Arsenic Mt. Apo," we wish to say that the arsenic case in Mt. Apo is an old issue that has been addressed by several investigations conducted by both government and multisectoral groups from 1993-1995. The results of these investigations showed no evidence that the arsenic came from our geothermal project. Further, the investigations established elevated arsenic levels in the natural environment.

We wish to assure all that the PNOC Energy Development Corp. operates in accordance with environmental and societal standards. We are a responsible corporate citizen with genuine concern and respect for people and the environment.

—ESTER R. GUERZON,
vice president for logistics
and administration,
PNOC Energy Development Corp.,
Merritt Road,
Fort Bonifacio, Makati City



Very slow or lost mail

I WISH to lodge a complaint about the postal service at the Parañaque Central Post Office. I know my complaint is not new anymore. This is about the parcel that was sent to me from England which I never received.

Last Sept. 22, 2003, a friend from England sent me a parcel using registered mail which I should have received in my Parañaque address after two weeks. Last Oct. 6, after no notice from the Parañaque Post Office had come, I went to the post office to inquire about it. They told me that since the peak Christmas season had already begun, it might take up to three weeks before I could receive my parcel. Oct. 13, the third week, came and went but still no parcel arrived.

Can someone explain this satisfactorily?

—EDENLEI T. BARIA,
Edenlei.Baria@
man.ph.sykes.com

Defending the reason for Meralco refunds

I WRITE in response to the letter of Leonardo Mabale, head of the Refund Management Task Force of Meralco titled, "Meralco refunds being done as efficiently as possible." (PDI, 11/11/03)

Let me go straight to the heart of the matter, and I quote Mabale: "All the charges reflected in all customers' bill passed through the scrutiny of the regulatory body, the Energy Regulatory Board then and the Energy Regulatory Commission now."

The truth is: the 1994 increase was granted summarily and without public scrutiny, as the provisional authority was granted less than 30 days after it was filed, and without the benefit of a single public hearing.

Proof that the 1994 rate increase did not have firm basis is the ERB decision of 1998, which was based on a two-year review done by the Commission on Audit and more than one year of deliberations and scrutiny done by the ERB under Chair Neptali Franco.

In contrast, the Meralco provisional authority that led to the 16.7 centavo per kilowatt-hour overcharge from 1994 to 2003 was issued by the ERB under Chair Rex Tantiangco, in just 20-odd days.

About the advertisements, we have in fact raised the following points with the ERC in a letter dated Sept. 16, 2003:

1. Who is going to pay for the ads? Will it be a pass-on cost?

2. Why does the ad not make reference to the legal and factual bases of the refund, which is the Supreme Court decision in November 2002, reversing the Court of Appeals on its order nullifying the ERB refund order of 1998?

Incidentally, the ERB did not "reverse itself in a 1998 ruling." The provisional authority granting the 18.4 centavo/kWh increase in 1994 also directed the COA to verify the claims of Meralco, and the Franco ERB merely adopted in most part the results of the COA audit completed in February 1997. I hope this "truth," too, does not escape Meralco.

In the interest of truth, the ad should clearly state the role of the Lawyers Against Monopoly in the Philippines (LAMP), the Office of the Solicitor General and other similar groups in holding the line for consumers all the way to the Supreme Court.

3. How is the refund computed? Is it based on actual consumption from 1994 to 2003? Or is Meralco doing "averaging"? Are some being overpaid and others underpaid?

That is implicit in the 1994 provisional authority to increase rates which had the express proviso that should it be shown (as the COA audit showed) that Meralco collected more than it was entitled to, the excess should be refunded to its customers. Under the tenor of that authority, Meralco had to maintain those records of payments.

We hold no rancor against Meralco employees, Mabale included. They, too, are consumers. It is the present management of Meralco that we hold responsible for the self-dealing and sweetheart contracts that have distorted Meralco's retail rates.

—DICK N. ECHAVEZ,
head, education and research,
National Association of Electricity
Consumers for Reforms
(Nasecore), Unit 616 Roxas
Seafront Gardens,
Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

Premium on consistency

THIS is about the editorial of Oct. 26, where I was presented in a bad light for being one of the endorsers of the second impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

I have so much to lose in a decision such as this, starting with anger from my party plus a barrage of angry messages from friends and loved ones. I have suffered and continue to suffer for the stand I took.

When I signed and pushed for the impeachment of former President Estrada, the same attacks and excuses were made; constitutional crisis, collapse of our nation and democratic institutions, and yet the truth came out. When I sided with the complainants in the impeachment cases versus Ombudsman Aniano Desierto and Comelec Commissioner Luz Tancangco, there too was political fallout and grave threats such as personal investigations and warnings against the elections. Yet, I continued on my course to seek out the truth.

I believe this present matter is no different, charges of misuse of the Judiciary Development Fund (JDF) and the refusal of Davide to explain the charges point by point to the aggravation felt by the members of Congress.

What made me truly convinced to sign the impeachment complaint was the fact that the Chief Justice's son was the head of the bids and awards committee and the sole signatory of the funds to be spent was his father. I find that highly unethical and truly questionable. In like manner, if the Speaker had appointed his son or brother as head of the purchasing department of the House, that would cause a howl of protest as well.

I was not approached by Rep. Gilbert Teodoro or Rep. Wimpy Fuentebella but I sought them out to ask for documents to study. This was not a party stand nor can any political motives be ascribed. On my part, it was purely a conscience vote. I have been consistent in my stand for good governance and transparency from the first historic impeachment complaint to this one.

Lastly, I don't deserve the label of being an "ambitious politician" since quite the opposite is true. When my term as Bukidnon representative ends in 2007, I look forward to an early retirement from politics.

Politics in our country is so destructive that it would scare even the most sincere, dedicated and idealistic person from remaining in the political arena. Consistency that I will never compromise, is what I continue to fight for. I remember my father telling me that you have no credibility if you are not consistent in what you believe in.

—REP. JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI,
3rd District, Bukidnon

Treachery from Congress

IT really pains me to read that the 12th Congress has decided to impeach Chief Justice Davide Jr. This just shows the extremely flawed sense of what is right in our congressmen, particularly two young and promising legislators. Ombudsman Aniano Desierto and Comelec Commissioner Luz Tangcangco were not impeached despite all the evidence and testimonies against them. But Davide, with no less than the Commission on Audit clearing him of any misuse of the JDF, was impeached.

If these young leaders of our country are acting this way this early, what is there to hope for in the future? It is incumbent upon all right-minded Filipinos to show their indignation at this kind of treachery to the country. Let us all remember the congressmen who signed the petition and later, the senators who will support it or will vote in favor of it, and vow never to ever let them have a chance to occupy any position, even that of a barangay captain!

—ALEX RAUL PASCUA,
pascua@mydestiny.net,

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS
Collection District II-B

MANILA INTERNATIONAL CONTAINER PORT
November 3, 2003

NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 2601 to 2610 of the TCCP, as amended, in relation to CMO 5-2003 dated March 17, 2003 and CMO 18-2003 dated 25 July 2003, there will be Public Auction Sale through SEALED BIDDING, to be conducted by this Port on November 14, 2003, 2:30 P.M., to be held at the 2nd Floor, MICP Building, North Harbor, Isla Puting Bato, Tondo, Manila, the herein-described articles in lot. Said article shall be available for viewing on November 13, 2003. In the event of a failed bidding, the second auction shall be conducted on the third business day following the first bidding.

Lot No. 048-03 ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLY FLEXO PRINTING S.I. No. 02-121 1st Advertisement "As Is Where Is" Floor Price : Php 9, 123,683.16	12 Cases, One (1) Set Printing Machine Location: ICTSI CY, Contr. No. CRXU-4359245

Basic Guidelines:

1. File the duly accomplished Registration Form (name, address, TIN and other relevant circumstances to be indicated).
2. Php 2,000.00 Registration Fee (Non-Refundable)
3. Php 20,000.00 Cash Bond (Refundable)
4. The highest bidder shall be required to pay 50% of the bid price either in cash and/or Manager's Check immediately and the balance of 50% shall be paid within the next business day.
5. After the second failed bidding, a particular lot may be offered to all qualified bidders for negotiated sale, subject to compliance of the requirements under Section IV – J of CMO 5-2003.
6. Payment by Cashier's/Manager's Checks to the BOC/MICP shall bear the following:
   a. Pay to the order of Land Bank of the Philippines – BOC MICP E.O.
   b. For credit of the Bureau of Customs
   c. For the account of:

Bidder

For further details, please contact Mr. Isidro A. Pre, Chief, Auction & Cargo Disposal Division, MICP, Tel. no. 247-09-77.

(Sgd.) ATTY. FELIPE A. BARTOLOME, CESO V
District Collector of Customs

(PDI – November 5, 2003)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation
Visayas-Operation and Maintenance
Banilad Power Complex, Nasipit, Talamban C.C.
Tel. No. 346-3427, 346-9449

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID
AD NO. TRANS-VIS-2003-10

Bidding Dates SCHEDULE I : November 20, 2003 @ 2:00 PM at the District 2 Office
SCHEDULE II : November 21, 2003 @ 2:00 PM at the District 2 Office

The National Transmission Corporation, Administration Division-Visayas invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids on **(pls. see above schedule)** to be opened publicly at Transco Bidding Room, Banilad Power Complex, Nasipit, Talamban, Cebu City for the following requirements:

PR NO.	DESCRIPTION	QTY./UM	APPROVED BUDGET (ABC)
SCHEDULE I	(REPUBLICATION)		
PSMD-TC-2003-020	High voltage DC Electric test set	1 set	Php 750,000.00
NAP-2003-074	Storage Battery, lead acid	60 pcs	960,000.00
NAP-2003-075	Capacitor voltage transformer	2 units	250,000.00
NAP-2003-080	Fault indicator	8 pcs	304,000.00
PSMD-RS-03-033	VHF mobile radio	2 sets	100,000.00
SODV-2003-003	Establishment of anti-static carpet	lot	185,000.00
NORS-2003-041	Generator set	1 set	696,000.00
PSMD-RS-03-038	RF frequency counter, portable	1 set	25,000.00
PSMD-RS-03-040	RF power meter	1 set	30,000.00
PSMD-RS-03-042	Digital multimeter w/ dB functions	2 sets	30,000.00
VSOD-03-044	2 MB UV Electronically erasable/programmable ROM	12 PCS	57,120.00
	1 MB UV Electronically erasable/programmable ROM	12 PCS	36,312.00
	256K (32K x 8) Non-volatile CMOS static RAM	12 PCS	107,700.00
	POWER MOSFET, IFR-540	10 PCS	11,750.00
	POWER MOSFET, IFR-740	10 PCS	15,000.00
	INDUCTOR, 100uH, TEARDROPS CAP TYPE	24 PCS	1,440.00
NOPC-2003-230	Insulator, suspension	3,549 pcs	5,855,850.00
SCHEDULE II			
D2CB-2003-148	Various hardware materials	various	Php 937,168.40
D2CB-2003-150	Oil, transformer/insulating	55 drums	610,500.00
PSMD-TC-03-099	Decade resistor boxes	1 set	700,000.00
NAP-03-322	Power circuit breaker	2 units	3,926,300.00
NCCP-03-004403	Air conditioners, various specifications	7 units	523,380.00

All bids should be within the Approved Budget of Contract to be Bid in order to qualify.

Eligibility forms and bidding documents are available starting October 29, 2003, at the Materials Management Services Section from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday to Friday, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 200.00 / schedule and presentation of TIN/ Supplier's Number (DCE). Last day of issuance of bidding documents will be on November 10, 2003.

For further inquiries please contact Mr. J.D. Rosell thru telephone number (032)346-9449 or fax number (032) 346-3427.

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. The procurement rules and regulations used in this transaction shall be in accordance with the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Executive Order 40 and as amended by Republic Act 9184.

The Corporation reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, waive any defects therein and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at anytime prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of BAC's action.

(Sgd.) OCTAVIO G. BRIONES
Chairman, BAC

(PDI – Oct. 29 & Nov. 5, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Pangasinan
City of Alaminos

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bids and Awards Committee, Alaminos City, Pangasinan, invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid on the following project.

Name of Project : Completion of a 2-Storey Day Care Center
Project Location : San Jose, Alaminos City, Pangasinan
Approved Budget for the Contract : P486,747.25
Source of Fund : 20% Development Fund
Contract Duration : 55 cd
Scope of Work : Concrete, Masonry, Carpentry, Structural Steel, Tinsmithry, Fabricated, Plumbing, Painting, Electrical
Contractor's CIAP Classification : At least "Small A"

The schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

Period for the Submission of Letter of Intent : October 31-November 18, 2003
Period for the Submission of Eligibility Forms : November 19-25, 2003
Period for the Issuance of Bid Documents : December 1-8, 2003
Pre-Bid Conference at 2:00 PM, Office of the BAC Chairman December 8, 2003
Last Day of Submission of Bids in Sealed Envelope, c/o BAC Secretariat December 22, 2003 at 12:00 Noon
Opening of Bids in Sealed Envelope at the Office of the BAC Chairman December 22, 2003 at 2:00 P.M.

Complete sets of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Documents may be obtained at the Office of the BAC Secretariat, City Hall, Alaminos City, Pangasinan, c/o **ENGR. ROEL T. AÑONUEVO**, City Planning and Development Coordinator (Tel. No. 075-551-6449) upon payment of non-refundable fee of P250.00. Duly accomplished Eligibility Forms shall be submitted in sealed envelope addressed to the BAC Chairman, C/O of the BAC Secretariat.

Prospective Bidders shall signify their conformance to the bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. The criteria to be used by BAC in the eligibility check of prospective bidders shall be on a non-discretionary "pass/fail" basis.

The provisons of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, and other, applicable rules and regulations shall govern all particulars relative to Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-Bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract.

The BAC reserves the right to accept or reject all bids or part thereof, to waive formality therein or to accept such bids or to award any work that is considered most advantageous to the local government unit.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. MARIO R. MABALOT**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

Website-Alaminoscity.gov.ph; E-mail-Planningl@Alaminoscity.gov.ph; Fax No. (075)-552-7109 • Tel. Nos. (075) 551-6449/654-1089

(PDI–Oct. 30 & Nov. 5, 2003)

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CHR to probe 'lumad' recruitment for combat

DAVAO CITY—The Commission on Human Rights said it would start an investigation of reports that the military and the New People's Army (NPA) have been recruiting and arming members of indigenous communities.

Commissioner Dominador Calamba, during a forum here last week, admitted he already received reports that the military and the communist rebels have been recruiting *lumad* for combat purposes.

But Calamba said he did not take action on these reports because he was not aware that it was a violation of the Indigenous People's Rights Act (Ipra).

Various tribal groups said the recruitment was aimed at pitting lumad against each other.

During the same forum, former North Cotabato Rep. Gregorio Andolana said the recruitment of lumad in pursuit of ideologies was not only a violation of tribal traditions but was also against the law.

Andolana was Ipra's principal author.

"That is a gross violation of the law. They are not supposed to be armed," Andolana said.

"I was at a loss. I did not know that there is a law that prohibits the recruitment and arming of the lumad," Calamba said.

He warned that military officials responsible for the recruitment would be in big trouble.

"We will subject that military commander to an investigation. If we have to jail them, then we will jail them," Calamba said.

The NPA had earlier admitted that there was a growing number of lumad joining the insurgency but said it was not forcing them.

Jorge Madlos, spokesperson of the National Democratic Front (NDF) for Mindanao, said members of the indigenous communities could no longer bear the hardship they were experiencing because of the government's neglect and abuse.

In Mati, Davao Oriental, ranking military and police officials had denied they were recruiting tribes people against the NPA.

The province is one of the areas where the military and the police have been recruiting members for its anti-communist vigilante group Alamara forces according to tribal leaders.

Lawyer Alejandro Aquino, who serve as 'dangyaan' or adviser to Mandaya lumad, also confirmed the claims.

"No, we do not provide firearms to the lumad for them to fight the NPA. As a matter of fact, we do not encourage them to fight the NPA rebels because the communist rebels are heavily armed," Col. Rodolfo Obaniana, commander of the Army's 701st Infantry Brigade, told reporters.

Chief Supt. Isidro Lapena, Southern Mindanao police director, also issued a similar denial but said they were not preventing lumad from joining militias.

Dennis Jay C. Santos and Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Cultists raid tombs to steal kneecaps

MATI, Davao Oriental—Members of a cult here called "Pulahan" are allegedly preying on the dead, destroying tombs in public cemeteries.

Several residents in various towns here who trooped to the cemeteries on All Souls' Day were shocked upon seeing the tombs of their departed loved ones destroyed by suspected Pulahan members.

Pulahan cult members identify themselves by wearing red headbands. In the late 1980s, the Pulahans thrived not only in Davao Oriental but also in its neighboring provinces like Davao Del Norte and Davao del Sur.

According to one of the cult's leaders, their members reached about 100,000 in the late 1980s. But in the 1990s, the group started to break up and this significantly reduced the number of its members.

The Pulahans fiercely fought the New People's Army and Moro National Liberation Front rebels operating in the Davao provinces, according to cult leader Simo Suruyan, 64.

Despite a decrease in the number of its members, the cult continues to prey on the dead, swooping down on tombs to get "tuway-tuway" or kneecaps, which they believe would give them immunity from bullets and bladed weapons.

Jun Panies, caretaker of the Mati public cemetery, told the INQUIRER that the cult members had destroyed thousands of tombs here.

Panies said Davao Oriental (Second Dist.) Rep. Joel Mayo Almario had allocated funds for the repair of the destroyed tombs. *Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

US troops given tribute at Clark

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—United States troops involved in rescue missions during Mt. Pinatubo's 1991 eruptions, the world's worst in the 20th century, received recognition, although delayed, on Monday.

"Some are no strangers to the Philippines. They were the first to respond to the Mt. Pinatubo (disaster)," said Brig. Gen. Charles Hotchkiss, commander of the Philippine Air Force's 600th Air Base Wing, referring to the US Third Marine Expeditionary Forces (MEF).

"Through them, countless lives were saved," Hotchkiss said in a tribute during the opening rites of Talon Vision-04, a ground-air training with emphasis on counter-terrorism combat.

Col. Steven Busby, co-director of the 15-day exercise, "took off as soon as he unloaded cargo," Hotchkiss said.

Busby flew a KC-130 cargo plane that hauled in food supplies given to residents and to Filipino and American troops who rid Clark of volcanic debris.

Clark, then the base of US 13th Air Force and the US military's biggest facility in the Asia-Pacific, is 20 km east of the volcano. A week before the June 12, 1991 blasts, some 10,000 US troops and their dependents were transferred to Subic Naval Base in Zambales where they sailed back to the States.

About 2,000 US soldiers, including those with the Third MEF, remained at Clark and Subic until 1994.

Over 1.3 million residents in Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales were displaced at the height of the disaster.

Returning eight years later, Busby said: "It is amazing to come back and see the difference between the immediate aftermath and what we have here now that is absolutely phenomenal."

Gordon offers P300M for tourist arrivals

BAGUIO CITY—To meet his self-imposed targets, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon is offering up to P300 million in cash rewards to every town and province which manages to meet their quotas of foreign tourists before the year ends.

Gordon's offer could mean a good fortune for poor towns in the Cordillera.

According to a new quota chart devised by the Department of Tourism for the program, the fifth class town of Daguioman in Abra needs to invite only 74 tourists and *balikbayans* (returning migrant Filipinos) until Dec. 31 to earn a P50,000 jackpot for lower-class towns.

The DOT is not making any distinctions about foreign tourists or *balikbayans* Daguioman could draw, "as along as they visit any part of the country," said Edgar Jularbal, DOT Cordillera tourism officer.

"We are really targeting migrant Filipinos or overseas Filipino workers," he said.

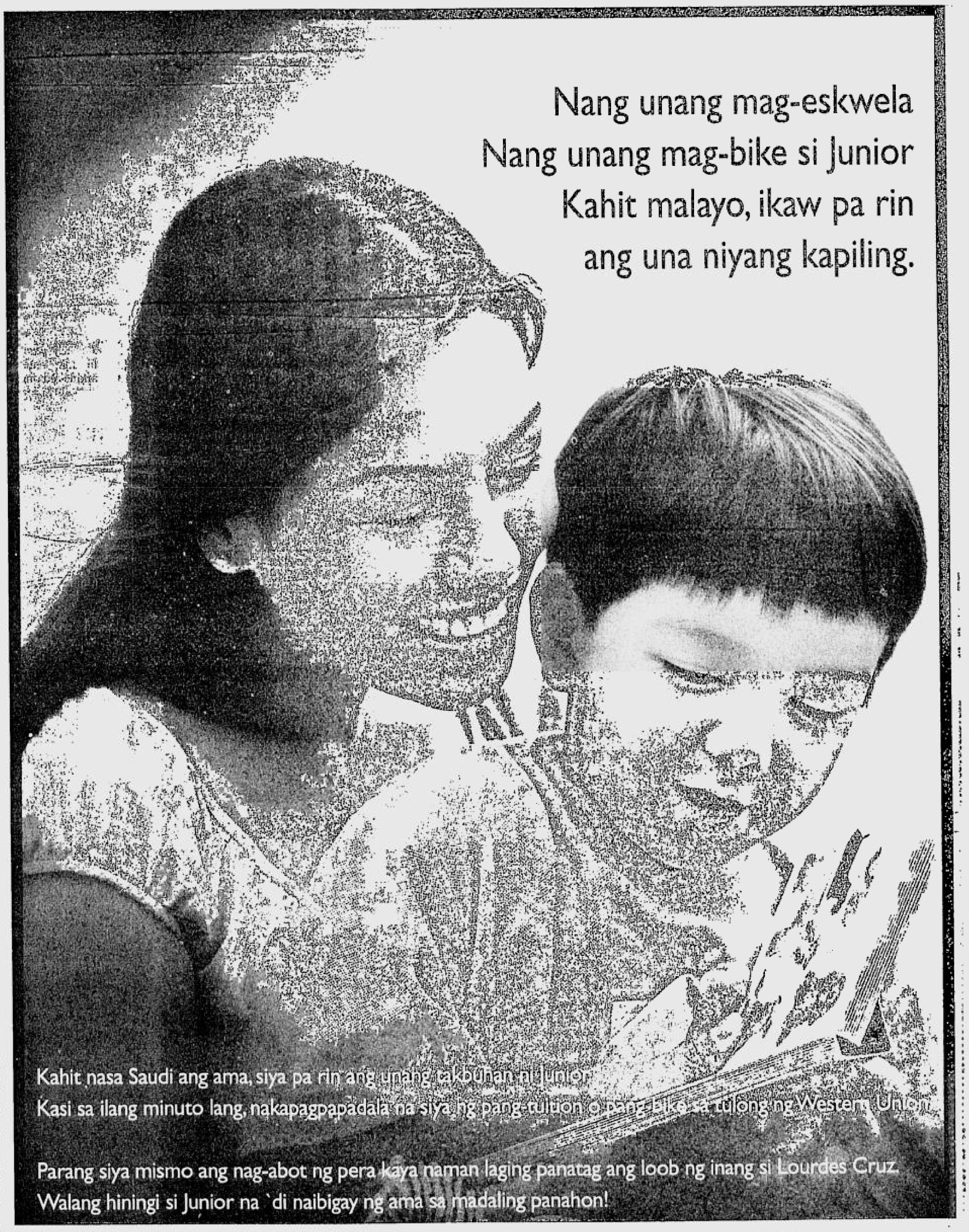
The country needs to fill up only a shortfall of 1.4 million tourists because it managed to draw 1.2 million of a 2.6-million target in September, Jularbal said.

Gordon earlier told the INQUIRER that the shortfall is not a problem, provided everyone helps. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon*

Countdown for Justice

WAPILE

IT is exactly 541 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.



Nang unang mag-eskwela
Nang unang mag-bike si Junior
Kahit malayo, ikaw pa rin
ang una niyang kapiling.

Kahit nasa Saudi ang ama, siya pa rin ang unang takbuhan ni Junior.
Kasi sa ilang minuto lang, nakapagpapadala na siya ng pang-tuition o pang-bike sa tulong ng Western Union.

Parang siya mismo ang nag-abot ng pera kaya naman laging panatag ang loob ng inang si Lourdes Cruz.
Walang hiningi si Junior na `di naibigay ng ama sa madaling panahon!

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

MEN garbed in native Cordillera attire perform a ritual dance to bring good luck to the newly opened Baguio-Mt. Provinces Museum. EV ESPIRITU

The 'wanderer' finds a home

By Jovelyn Reyes and Rod Bansag
Baguio City

THE "WANDERER" has finally settled down, so said Leonora Paraan-San Agustin, curator of the Baguio-Mt. Provinces Museum in Baguio City.

The 88-year-old San Agustin, who has devoted her life as keeper of the Cordillera's cultural treasures, said she is happy to die now that the museum has found a place that it will call its home.

"I am willing to die after seeing the museum rise. I now feel tired and weak," she said. San Agustin has been working pro bono as curator since 1985.

It took 13 years for San Agustin to see the Cordillera artifacts and antique collections settle in a permanent home.

On Oct. 25, local and tourism officials inaugurated the P11.4-million Baguio-Mt. Provinces Museum at Gov. Pack and Harrison Roads.

The four-story building, a modernized version of the Ifugao hut, is now home to at least 15,000 authenticated artifacts representing the rich Cordillera culture, including an ancient mummy, the museum's main attraction.

'Lifelong dream'

"It was not easy. I spent all my retirement years begging and cajoling politicians and government agencies to give us funds to build this museum," San Agustin said.

"Finally, as I look at the finished building, I feel a sense of achievement. I was an achiever all my life but I treat this (building) as my lifetime achievement."

Former Baguio Mayor Virginia de Guia said seeing the museum in a permanent home was San Agustin's "lifelong dream."

Even when the 1990 killer earthquake destroyed the original building, San Agustin was not deterred. "The museum was like a nomad, we transferred from one place to another, but we did not stop operations," she said.

For nine years, the museum occupied a space at the Camp John Hay commissary before it moved to the Baguio Convention Center, which had become its temporary home for four years.

"It was difficult. We were like squatters in our own city. I realized then and there that we need a permanent space because each time we moved, artifacts were either destroyed or lost," San Agustin said.

The museum's "glorious years" were in Camp John Hay because many people went to the museum to see the artifacts. That time, the museum was earning at least P100,000 annually, San Agustin said.

But it was Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan who appropriated P8.2 million from his Countrywide Development Fund for the construction of the museum.

A KALINGA jar with intricate carvings is among the artifacts displayed in the museum. EV ESPIRITU

The construction took at least a year. "I personally supervised the construction, I made it a point to see to it that no single nail was wasted," San Agustin said.

The museum is divided into four parts: the ground floor serves as training center and exhibit area, the second floor is called the "Cordillera floor," the third floor is called the "Baguio floor," and the fourth floor serves as library and research area.

The Cordillera floor features the region's native clothes and accessories, including agricultural tools and weapons. Among the weapons showcased were *gayang* (spear), *sinawit* (Kalinga head axe) and *karasag* (shield).

The Baguio floor traces the development of Baguio City through rare photographs taken from 1900 to the post World War II years.

Mummy

"We have enough space. What we need now are people to come and see the place. Most Cordillerans do not care about their history and culture so I went around public and private schools encouraging principals to bring their students here and teach them to appreciate cultural preservation," she said.

The museum's main feature is a mummy, believed to be a 100-year-old woman from Bakun, Benguet.

In 1999, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) ordered the retrieval of all mummies and their return to their original burial sites.

But Agustin said she did not let go of the museum's mummy. "I refused to give the mummy because it is the best selling point of the museum, aside from the fact that it is part of the Cordillera culture," she said.

She said most of the artifacts exhibited in the museum, mostly wooden implements and textile, came from prominent families in the region.

Among the families and agencies that donated their heirlooms, antique jars, antique Chinese wares (which were bartered by Cordillerans to Chinese immigrants) and Cordillera costumes were the De Guias, Bautistas, Salvosas and the Metrobank Foundation.

San Agustin said these families bought the items from old Igorot clans.

A best testament to Beyer's love and respect of Ifugaos

By Desiree Caluza
Banaue, Ifugao

ATOP a hill facing the rice terraces in the town center of Banaue, Ifugao, is a simple structure housing probably the best testament to the love and respect of one American of the Ifugao people.

The museum featuring the artifact collection and research of the late American anthropologist H. Otley Beyer honors Ifugao heritage and provides visitors a glimpse of the culture of these proud people who built the world famous rice terraces thousands of years ago.

Karen Luglug, Beyer's great granddaughter, said the collection is worth saving since the artifacts are just a few precious items that remind Ifugaos and the Filipinos of their heritage.

Beyer was known for his extensive research on Philippine ethnography, archaeological items, photographs and his collection of tektites.

But most of all, Beyer was known for documenting Ifugao life and culture through community integration in the early 1900s. Beyer also adopted the Ifugao culture when he married an Ifugao woman.

It was in 1993 that the descendants of Beyer thought of building a museum in his memory.

"My paternal aunt, Jovita Luglug, decided to build her own house. That was when the idea of putting up a private museum was born through the addition of another floor that would house the collection of my great grandfather," Luglug said.

Ifugao culture

After the house was built, the family realized that a single floor would not be enough to accommodate the collection, so they had to use two floors to serve as showrooms. The additional space also accommodated more books and literature on Ifugao culture.

Luglug said many in Beyer's collection of artifacts were missing, but they were able to save his significant finds like antique kitchenware (wooden spoons, forks and baskets) and the native costumes of the Ifugao, Bontoc and Kalinga.

His collection featured hunting implements, trade jars from China, heirloom beads, pieces of jewelry and woven garments. Ifugao woodcarvings, such as the various representations of the *búlul* (Ifugao rice god) were also prominent in the collection.

Black and white photographs of the Ifugaos at the turn of the 20th century were hung on the museum's walls.

An interesting piece was a photograph of the cast of the war film "Apocalypse Now," which starred Hollywood actors Martin Sheen, Marlon Brando and Ifugao men and women who played bit parts in the movie.

"We thought that it was relevant to put (the photograph) there because it showed that the Ifugaos were part of an international film. It also reminded us that the Ifugaos in that film were not exploited but were treated well," Luglug said.

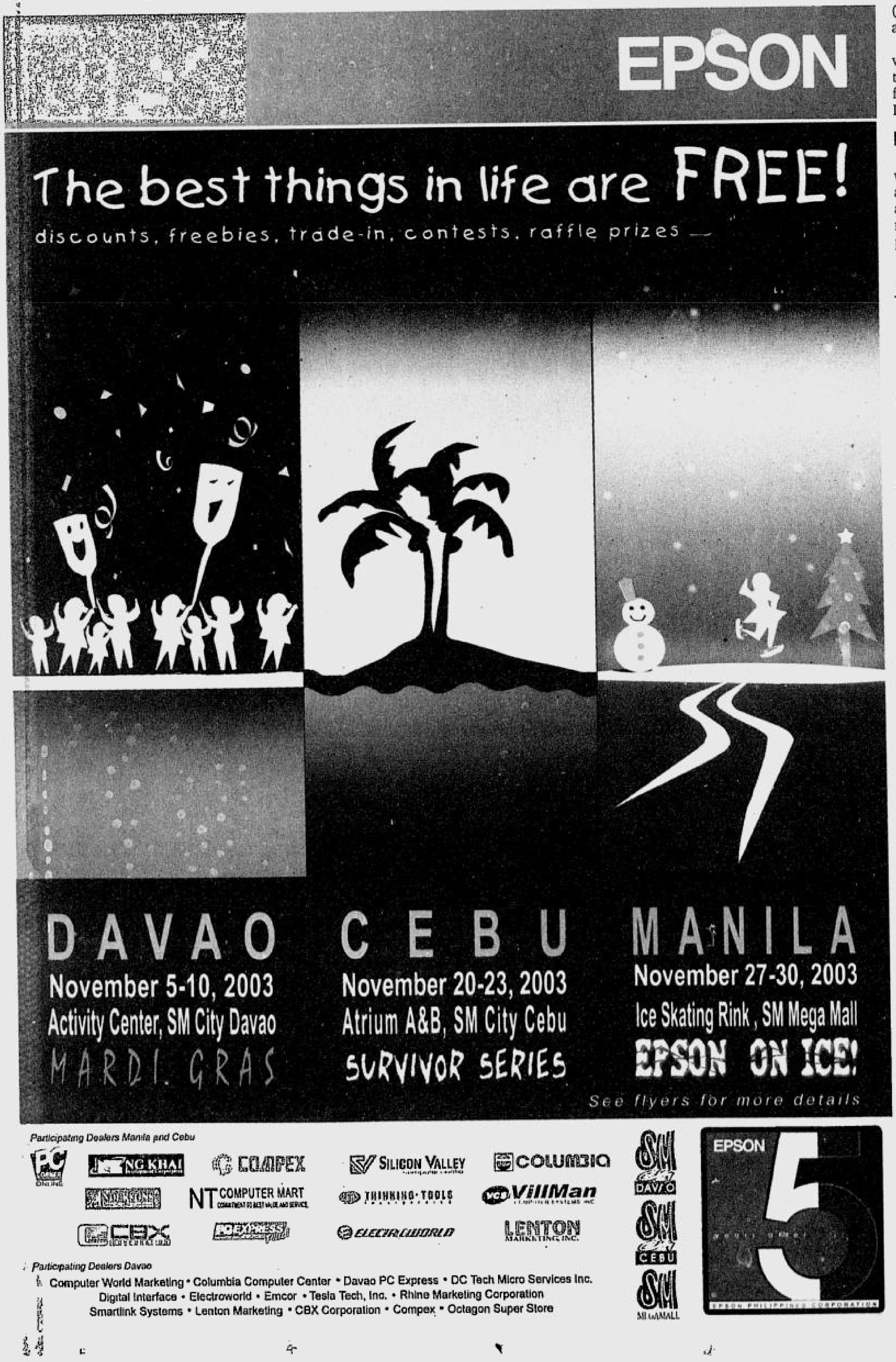
Luglug recalled how some scholars had misunderstood her grandfather when he attended the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair in Missouri.

The exposition showcased the native Filipinos from the Cordillera, the Negritos of Central Luzon, Moros of Mindanao and the Visayans. These people, however, were deemed "exploited" and were projected as "wild people" in the exposition.

Interest in Ifugao

"(My great grandfather) was there to watch and not to participate in the exposition's staging. Actually, it was the exposition

A BEST/A19



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A best testament to Beyer's love and respect of Ifugaos

From page A18

that opened up his interest to come to Banaue," Luglug said.

Beyer was born on July 13, 1883 in Iowa and studied at the Corneal College in Mount Vernon. He graduated in Iowa State College and later went to the University of Denver, where he obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1904.

His work at the US Geological Survey introduced him to archaeology.

According to University of the Philippines anthropology professor E. Arsenio Manuel, Beyer spent a couple of weeks at St. Louis between June and July 1904 to watch the exposition.

"There was a Maranao orchestra playing native musical instruments that attracted thousands of Americans, among them Frances Densmore, later to become the outstanding ethnomusicologist of her age. Although this lady did not come to the Philippines as H. Otley Beyer did, she was the first American to write on Filipino music and scale," Manuel wrote.

"His interest aroused, H. Otley Beyer talked to Dr. Albert Ernest Jenks, official in-charge of the exhibits and the chief of the Philippine ethnological survey. He received some encouragement, and by the fall of 1904 he had decided to join Philippine colonial service," he said.

On Aug. 16, 1905, Beyer arrived in Manila only to find that his position had been abolished by the Reorganization Act of 1905. Beyer then accepted an alternative assignment in the Mt. Province.

After buying provisions and preparing for four days, he took the train to Pangasinan, which was being ravaged by cholera at that time.

"It was also in Pangasinan where a tropical storm overtook him, his first experience in the islands. With the help of *cargadores* (porters), he reached his destination, Banaue," Manuel said.

Beyer decided to make the Philippines his home as he started to understand the culture of the people he saw in the St. Louis fair. Manuel said Beyer loved Ifugao's mountain landscape and rice terraces, its villages and people.

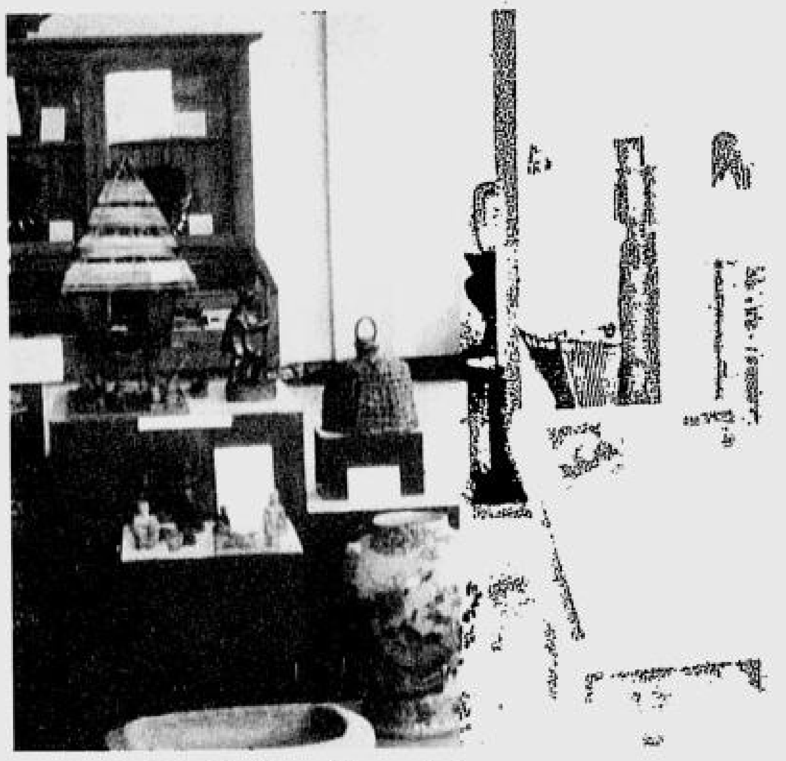
Beyer served as a supervising teacher in the province and stayed in Banaue. He went back to the US for further studies on anthropology and when he returned to Banaue in January 1910, Beyer fell in love with a village girl named Lingnayu and later married her.

From 1910 to 1914, Beyer was engaged in collecting literature on the Ifugao people. He expanded his fieldwork among the other mountain peoples such as the Bontocs, Kalingas and other tribes.

Luglug said her family wanted to acquire some pieces of Beyer's tektite collection now in the National Museum. Some pieces, she said, are kept in the National Library of Australia in Canberra.

Descendant Paul Beyer said H. Otley Beyer's archeological collection, valued at $1.5 million during World War II, was spared from the devastation of the war.

"The collection is the most valuable single possession of the Philippine people, relating to their past encounters and unquestionably is the most valuable scientific collection in the Far East. Its survival is Godsent," Paul Beyer said.



THE INTERIOR of the Beyer Museum in Banaue. DESIREE CALUZA

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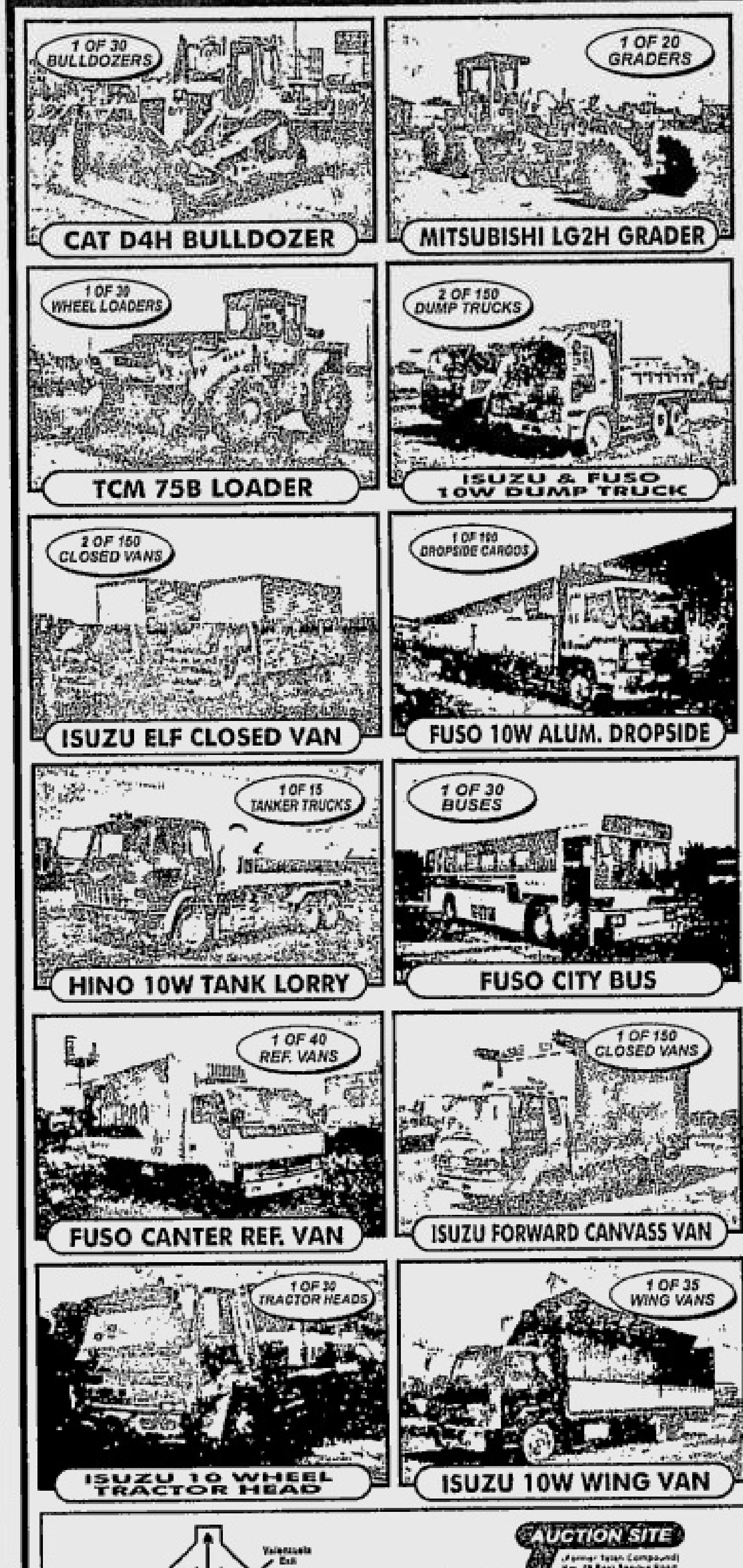
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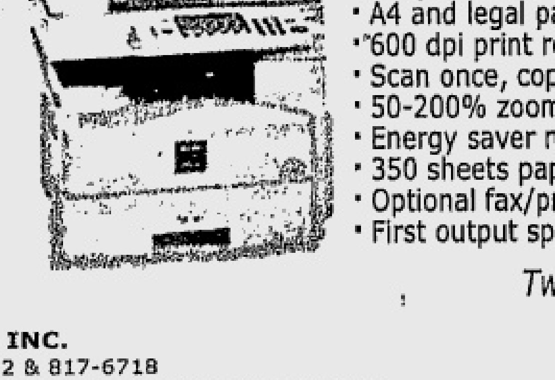
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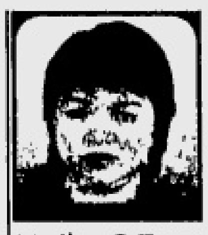
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President defends nationwide military red alert

From page A1

"We don't have successful coup attempts in our history, only successful coup rumors, because you can get your political goals through rumors," he told Reuters.

Wanted: leaders

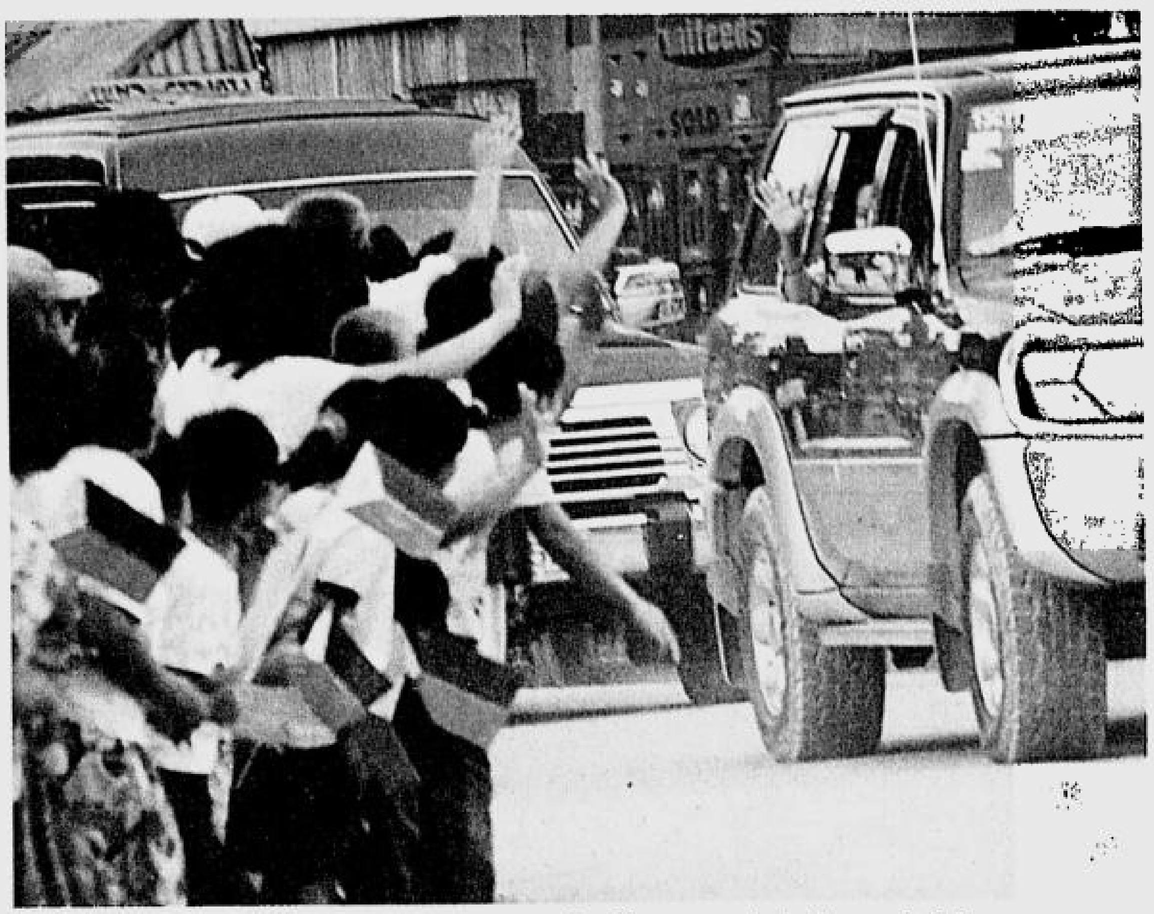
In Camp Crame, a senior Philippine National Police official mocked the fresh rumors, saying if there was in fact another coup being cooked up, who would lead the coup plotters?

Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, head of the Civil Security Group and a participant in the series of failed coups against the Aquino administration in the late 1980s, belittled the capability of supporters of the failed July 27 power grab to mount another destabilization attempt against the Macapagal administration.

The reason: the lack of a legitimate cause and credible leadership.

According to Berroya, the core group and sympathizers of the July uprising were "left in disarray" after their alleged leader, Sen. Gregorio Honasan, disowned them when the government discovered that the mutiny was in fact an elaborate plot to overthrow President Macapagal and was financed by some politicians.

"In any coup, a strong and credible leadership is needed to rally supporters behind a particular cause," he told the INQUIRER. "Without a leader, how could these people stage another coup at this time?"


SCHOOLCHILDREN welcome President Macapagal and her convoy in Antiquera, Bohol. VAL HANDUMON

Potential recruits

A senior police official involved in the investigation of the July uprising said yesterday the freed soldiers were "potential recruits" of a possible mutiny.

"The main thing working against them is the fact that they got neither a leader nor a cause."

In a statement, AFP spokesperson Lt. Col. Daniel A. Lucero said that the military, having insulated itself from politics, would remain "apolitical."

He said: "The AFP leadership is requesting groups and individuals who are spreading rumors of another military adventurism to refrain from doing so since this information is baseless."

Maj. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, the military's operations chief, also told reporters, "We are here to provide stability. The troops will only be sent out to quell public disorder. Otherwise, they will remain inside camp because we don't want to raise undue alarm."

Target: saboteurs

Military officials yesterday cautioned cause-oriented groups against any infiltration of their ranks by saboteurs when they stage rallies this week.

The Armed Forces placed on standby 500 crowd-control personnel in Camp Aguinaldo and activated the anti-destabilization Task Force Libra shortly after raising the red alert status at 7 a.m. yesterday.

"We are warning the rallyists to be vigilant so that their ranks will not be infiltrated by those who want to take advantage of their activities... their mass actions," Lucero said.

Big possibility

He said that there was "a big possibility" that the ralliers might be infiltrated by saboteurs or terrorists "who don't mind the loss of many lives provided that they can spread anxiety and fear among the audience, particularly the public."

Lucero insisted that the red alert declaration was aimed at controlling rowdy protesters, and not military adventurists.

"This heightening of red alert is directed toward these rallies, these mass action activities that will be conducted relative to the impeachment against the Chief Justice," he said.

"These coup jitters are just rumors so we don't base our plans on rumors," Lucero added as he squelched persistent speculations that the raising of the red alert was an offshoot of the coup rumors.

Retired generals

A group of retired military officials, the Association of Generals and Flag Officers (Agfo), urged the Armed Forces to stay neutral in the face of the polarization of the country over the impeachment complaint against Davide.

"The AFP should always be for the good of the general public and we are happy that the AFP and the PNP are under very capable hands. They will be called upon to quell disorder and I think they are ready for this purpose," Agfo president retired Brig. Gen. Ernesto Gidaya said in a press briefing.

"They are supposed to follow the Constitution," he added.

Gidaya warned that the impeachment complaint, which has polarized the people, would lead to chaos if transmitted to the Senate.

Crisis

"We have a crisis, in this particular case, a constitutional crisis. Our people get polarized; we have pro-impeachment and anti-impeachment groups. Later on, this will get out of hand. Then we have to call security forces to separate these groups," he said.

"Somebody may get hurt and then the situation will be exacerbated."

Gidaya said that no group had approached Agfo to support any destabilization attempt. *With reports from Reuters, AP*

'Don't blame us'

By Cynthia Balana

"DON'T look at us."

Proponents of the impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. yesterday refused to take the blame for the reported restiveness in some sectors of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Rep. Felix William Fuentebella of Camarines Sur, one of the complaint's two principal signatories, said there was no need to point an accusing finger at anyone since the people already knew why the military had attempted several coups against the government.

"Why blame us? The military has always been restive even before the impeachment of Davide," Fuentebella said.

Minority Leader Carlos Padilla of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino said it should be the Supreme Court which should be blamed for the ongoing constitutional crisis because of its refusal to cooperate with Congress in the investigation of the Judiciary Development Fund.

"We're just responding to the constitutional call. Now if there's restlessness, it is probably not real but imagined," Padilla said.

"And if ever it's true, it's not because of the impeachment but of other major issues such as the style of leadership of their commander-in-chief," he stressed.

Lakas Rep. Jacinto Paras of Negros Oriental said the Supreme Court's continued rejection of the oversight function of Congress was actually similar to the Oakwood uprising.

"What difference does that make?" he asked.

WIMPY INTERVIEW

Nothing but the truth

By Juan Escandor Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

AL UBANA, the station manager of Radio Mindanao Network's dwNX, sent me a text message on Saturday afternoon telling me to call former Speaker Noli Fuentebella "ASAP." I did not. As far as I was concerned, I was not in a position to call him because I had no reason to call him.

Ubana called me again in the evening and asked me if I had called Fuentebella. I said "No."

On Sunday morning, Fuentebella called me on my cell phone, Ubana having given him my number. Fuentebella was following up the story on five Bicol governors against the impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide. He said I should also get the other side of the story and invited me to visit him at 12 noon, Monday, at the Partido Development Administration office in Tigaon town. I agreed.

Fuentebella welcomed me when I arrived and gave me photocopies of the position paper of the ACEAP executive committee and the commentary of Dean Jorge Bocobo entitled "Judiciary putschism—mightier than the Magdalo." But the materials were secondary data that I could not use.

Fuentebella then called up his son, Rep. Felix William Fuentebella, or Wimpy, through his cell phone and then gave the phone to me. I asked Wimpy directly what his group was doing now that Speaker Jose De Venecia was "moving heaven and earth" to make Lakas members withdraw their signatures.

Wimpy said they had also initiated a countermove to increase the number of congressmen to sign. He was sure that they could get more signatures.

I quizzed Wimpy on what his group would do if their countermove failed. Wimpy said they had a major move: *"Aalisin namin si* Speaker De Venecia (We will remove the Speaker)." But he said they would only do that depending on the move that De Venecia would take.

I told the former Speaker what Wimpy told me, to make sure that he knew what his son had just told me. The former Speaker offered a more generalized phrasing, saying that I should just write "some congressmen." But I was bound to write the truth that it was not only "some congressmen" but also the congressmen in the core group of the impeachment.

FUENTEBELLA JOAN BONDOC

It's 'agaw-pirma' vs 'dagdag-pirma'

From page A1

But Custodio, who led one of three teams to gather enough signatures to meet the one-third rule, said: "We'll know the final figures on Nov. 10 when Congress resumes session."

"It would be like counting the chicks before the eggs hatch if we talk about the numbers now," she said. "It's all floating."

In a previous interview, Custodio disclosed that it took pro-impeachment advocates three days to gather more than the minimum required 76 votes before they filed the Davide impeachment complaint on Oct. 23.

Philippine Constitution Association president Juan Ponce Enrile and former Sandiganbayan Justice Harriet Demetriou cast doubt on whether the "signature snatching" campaign would have any effect on the House endorsement of the impeachment complaint.

Like bill's passage

"This is akin to a passage of a bill. When a bill has been duly approved by Congress or by a bicameral committee and ratified by both houses of Congress, the process is already complete on its third reading. Thus, the sponsors or co-sponsors, not merely supporters, can no longer withdraw their signatures," Demetriou said.

"The withdrawal of signatures is moot and academic. The impeachment process is now complete," she added.

Legal doubt

In a symposium on the Davide case, Enrile also questioned the legality of congressmen withdrawing their signatures, duly verified by the House secretary-general and reported to the House committee on rules, for the purpose of turning back the impeachment proceedings.

"Once a signature is placed and is verified under oath, it would be difficult to withdraw. It's like swearing over a document without meaning to," Enrile said. "It's almost like perjury," he added.

Enrile said that the House leadership's decision to postpone the transmittal of the impeachment complaint could have been meant to convince some of the signatories to take back their signatures.

"One legislator has been offered P10 million in projects just to withdraw the signature. The person declined," Enrile said in Filipino. Later on in an impromptu news conference and when asked about the identity of the legislator, Enrile said in English: "I would not tell you, in fairness to her."

86 or 89

Based on official House records, 95 congressmen signed the complaint as of Oct. 28.

Those who withdrew were Reps. JV Bautista (Sanlakas), Rozanno Rufino Biazon (LDP, Muntinlupa) and Soraya Jaafar (Lakas, Tawi-tawi), Oct. 28; Reylina Nicolas (Lakas, Nueva Ecija) and Renato Magtubo (Partido ng Manggagawa), Oct. 27; Mauricio Domogan (Lakas, Baguio), Oct. 25; Edgar Erice (Lakas, Caloocan), Oct. 24; Ernesto Nieva (Lakas, Manila), Oct. 23.

Leovigildo Banaag (Lakas, Agusan del Norte) withdrew on Nov. 3, for a total of nine withdrawals.

That left 86 signatories.

If the claim is true that three more will sign the complaint, the total would reach 89.

Under House rules, the endorsement of one-third of the 226-strong House or a minimum of 76, upon filing of a complaint automatically converts the complaint into the Articles of Impeachment, whose transmittal to the Senate is deemed automatic upon motion on the House floor.

Davide gave Senate detailed JDF records in March last year

From page A1

"I hope this information, which is a matter of public record, will help persuade some signatories in the House to reconsider their position and put an end to this constitutional crisis," he added.

Grievances

Jojo Guerrero, head of the SC Court Employees Association, said Davide ordered the opening of the JDF records when he met him yesterday morning to air the employees grievances.

Court employees want their amelioration pay—like rice and medical allowances—to be reinstituted. These allowances have not been given due to budgetary constraints.

But in a letter to the employees, Davide promised to increase the benefits of court employees, especially after the new Judicial Compensation Act allowed the increase of the JDF from new sources.

He also ordered the FMBO, in coordination with the Office of the Court Administrator, to draft the guidelines for the implementation of the increase of the employees share of the JDF.

Thanks court employees

"There will be therefore be more to distribute to you as your share in the JDF. I will also propose to the Supreme Court en banc measures to alleviate your condition, including the exclusion of justices and judges from the 80 percent share for cost of living allowance (COLA)," Davide said.

The law creating the JDF states that 80 percent of the fund should go to the Colas of judiciary employees while the remaining 20 percent is earmarked for court equipment and facilities.

Davide thanked the court employees who stood by him even after Congress impeached him.

"With all sincerity, I would like to thank you for standing by me in my hour of trial. I thank those who, while disappointed that they have not benefited from the pay-increase that Congress has granted the justices and judges, have nevertheless made it clear that they do not wish to be associated with the few who are determined to get me out of office," Davide said.

No ill feelings

"For those who, through misinformation, joined rallies or demonstrations or signed petitions and manifestos supposedly supporting calls for my investigation, I assure you that I harbor no ill-feelings. I understand that the misinformation machinery has been hard at work," he added.

Question vehicles

At an open forum between court officials, led by Deputy Court Administrator Jose Perez, and employees yesterday afternoon, the employees questioned the purchase of vehicles by SC justices and other court officials when many court salas do not even have enough tables or lighting.

Perez, however, pointed out that the cars were not "luxury vehicles" and that these were funded from the 20 percent of the JDF allotted to court facilities and equipment.

Davide said that while the judiciary had gotten only less than one percent of the national budget, he had tried to provide better working conditions and "generous privileges" for court employees.

He pointed out that it was during his watch that computers were acquired in large numbers.

"In 2002 alone, 2,115 computers were purchased—1,617 of which were distributed to all judicial regions in the Philippines. With the latest purchase of 500 units in 2003 (which are yet to be distributed), almost all courts nationwide shall be able to align with the full computerization program of the judiciary," Davide said.

Provided computers

He also said that during his term, more buses were acquired for employees and that employees were allowed to go on official study leave for a maximum of six months with salary and benefits.

Davide said that he regretted that only justices and judges would get increases in allowances under the new Judicial Compensation Act.

"Unfortunately, the national coffers are not enough to cover what would have been a greater allocation to the judicial branch. So, Congress ultimately extended the benefit only to justices and judges. Please understand that we have been in short supply of judges and many of our courts have not been in operation because lawyers have been turned off by the low pay that judges receive," Davide said.

Initial package

"It was neither my decision nor my choice to exclude you from the coverage of the law. That was a decision Congress had to make in view of our limited national resources. We cannot have everything at one time. The new law is but the initial package of benefits," he added.

SIX DIGIT
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6 13 19 23 26 27

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SUERTES (In exact order) 0 1 7

METRO

E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

BIG CELL HAUL
Bureau of Customs officials show some of the 12,300 top-of-the-line cell phones seized by elements of the bureau's Intelligence and Enforcement Group on Tuesday at the Manila International Container Port. The phones were found inside a container van consigned to J. Ferrer Trading which also contained other items declared as general merchandise. The shipment, worth P130 million, came from Hong Kong on board the vessel Stenheim, the bureau said in a press statement. ERIK ARAZAS

USE OF PERMANENT SIGNS

MMDA ties down out-of-line buses

By Margaux Ortiz

THE SIGNS that would spell the end of trip-cutting and out-of-line public utility vehicles (PUV) would be written on glass—or rather, on bus and jeepney windshields.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) yesterday said that it was expecting to stop the illegal practices of some PUV drivers by standardizing the signs which they use to indicate their routes.

MMDA chair Bayani Fernando said they would be prohibiting the use of the small, removable signs by PUVs and would require these to have their point to point routes painted instead.

For example, he said, if the route of a bus was Monumento to Baclaran passing through Edsa, the words "Monumento-Baclaran via Edsa" should be painted permanently on its windshield.

The MMDA will soon seek the passage of a Metro Manila Council resolution to penalize drivers and operators who would refuse to cooperate in the implementation of this policy.

Metro Manila Bus Operators Association president Ramon Castillo and Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Associations of the Philippines president Zenaida Maranan have expressed approval of the policy.

Northeast Manila Bus Operators Group spokesperson Gavin Peñalosa, on the other hand, was apprehensive, saying it could lead to more confusion on the part of both PUV personnel and commuters.

Meanwhile, a renewed drive against colorum buses and jeepneys led to the apprehension of 200 unregistered and colorum vehicles last week by the MMDA.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said the vehicles had been impounded and operators would have to pay P6,000 to redeem them.

The MMDA has been deputized by the Land Transportation Office and the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board to go after colorum PUVs.

The agencies sought the help of the MMDA because they were undermanned, Vergel de Dios said.

Bus owners appeal: Let us use curtains

By Edson Castro Tandoc Jr.

BUS OPERATORS and drivers yesterday appealed to the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority that they be allowed to keep and use curtains on their buses.

They issued the appeal following a report that the MMDA would ban next week the use of tinted windows and curtains on Public Utility Vehicles (PUVs).

The MMDA said the other day it would implement the ban on tinted windows and curtains to check the rise in holdup and robbery cases inside PUVs.

But while most bus operators and drivers were willing to stop using tinted windows in their buses, they appealed that they be allowed to keep their curtains, which they said were important for the comfort of their passengers.

However, they also called on their passengers to cooperate.

"The problem with some passengers is that they let down our curtains even when it's not really hot, making it easier for robbers to strike," Integrated Metro Buses Operators Association president Claire dela Fuente told the INQUIRER yesterday.

She also said that their members using tinted windows were willing to remove the tints in their windows. MMDA chair Bayani Fernando had given bus operators a week to remove their tints.

Ayala-Navotas bus driver Loloy Epan, 36, also welcomed the MMDA ban, saying that tinted windows were not necessary and would just attract robbers. However, he said curtains were indispensable and removing them would irk passengers.

But for Epan's conductor, Gerardo Mendoza, the best way to avoid bus robberies is for passengers to "refrain from flaunting their cell phones." He said that in most instances, robbers choose buses where passengers openly use their cell phones.

Improper hygiene eyed in new round of gastroenteritis cases

By Tarra Quismundo

THIS time, it was not because of water.

The repeat of the acute gastroenteritis outbreak in Tondo, Manila, over the weekend could have been due to unhygienic practices, an official of the Manila City Health Department (MCHD) said yesterday.

"That's the most probable cause," said MCHD administrative officer Clemente San Gabriel

San Gabriel explained that secondary infection could have occurred when people who had been stricken with the disease went to the cemeteries and shared food and utensils with other people.

He noted that the second wave of the outbreak happened from Oct. 30 to Nov. 2, when many people trooped to cemeteries to honor their dead.

Also, San Gabriel said, a previous patient who has just made a trip to the comfort room and then used kitchen utensils without washing his hands thoroughly could transfer the bacteria to people who use the utensils.

Dr. Benjamin Yzon of the MCHD Division of Preventable Disease had the same opinion, adding that the second wave was not that significant.

The new cases of acute gastroenteritis brought the total of infected persons to 576, including the 339 who suffered dehydration, loose bowel movement, and vomiting from Oct. 23 to 28.

The patients were residents of Velasquez, Raxabago, Tayabas, Capulong and other nearby streets in 11 barangays in Tondo.

Many of them, according to San Gabriel, have been discharged from the hospitals.

And as far as the health department was concerned, the second wave was over as only four people were admitted for the same disease from 2 p.m. on Sunday, to 2 p.m. Monday.

San Gabriel said the water that was coming out of the faucets in Tondo households already had normal chlorine levels and were already free from contaminants.

Meanwhile, the chlorine content of water in Metro Manila as of September has met the requirements set by the Philippine National Standard for Drinking Water, the Department of Health (DOH) said yesterday.

A DOH monitoring team said the water distributed by the Maynilad Water Services Inc., which supplies water to Tondo, and Manila Water Company Inc. was of "sanitary quality." *With a report from Blanche Rivera*

METROBRIEFS

Army man slain

ARMY Sgt. Sevene Jose Dawis on Monday was killed when two men allegedly tried to steal his motorcycle in Novaliches, Quezon City. Police said one of the suspects, Antonio Caballero, was also killed in the alleged robbery. Police said Dawis, 29, of AFP Housing, Western Bicutan, Taguig, was on his motorcycle with his wife when two men blocked his path on Road 2, Arty Subdivision, Talipapa, at 4:20 p.m. Police said that when Dawis put up a fight, the robbers shot him. But Dawis managed to fire back, hitting Caballero. The other suspect fled on Dawis' motorcycle. *Tina Santos*

Crossfire casualty

ROMY Reyes on Monday was killed in a crossfire between lawmen and suspected thieves in Quezon City. An investigator said Reyes, 31, of Valenzuela City, was having a drink with his friends at the corner of Ilagan and Kundiman streets, Barangay Paltok at about 4 p.m. when fleeing thieves exchanged fire with pursuing policemen in the area. A stray bullet hit Reyes, killing him instantly. *Tina Santos*

5 lawmen rapped

THE COMMISSION on Human Rights on Tuesday filed criminal charges against five members of the Central Police District for the illegal arrest of a vendor. The lawmen had claimed vendor Frederick Verano was a robber. PO2 Alfredo Pastor, PO2 Joemer Santiago, PO2 Jake Barila, PO1 Noeno Chua and PO1 Harby Francisco allegedly stormed the house of Verano in Tandang Sora, Quezon City on Dec. 27, 2002, according to a resolution signed by Jaime Hechanova, CHR National Capital Region director. Verano said he was threatened, beaten up and robbed by the lawmen. *Tina Santos*

MIT homecoming

THE MIT Ce-EnSE Alumni Association's 14th grand reunion and homecoming will be held on Nov. 8 at the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel in Manila. For details, contact Anna Martin at the MIT office, telephone number 374-2974, or Wilma Martin at telephone number 811-1777.

Cop jailed for keeping seized license

By Tarra Quismundo

SIX YEARS in jail in exchange for holding on to a driver's license.

This is what traffic policeman SPO2 Pedro Penilla got after he was found guilty by Judge Placido Marquez of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 40 of violating Republic Act No. 3019, the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Law.

Records of the case showed that on Feb. 10, 1998, Penilla confiscated the driver's license of Jaime Aslor because of obstruction, a traffic violation Aslor said he did not commit.

Aslor said Penilla, on board an owner-type jeepney, flagged him down as he was driving an MMTC Fastrans, with plate number NXS 689, in Quiapo, Manila.

Aslor, of Bagong Silang, Caloocan City, said Penilla, who appeared drunk at that time, asked for his license and cited him for obstruction.

He said that he did not protest anymore to prevent any confrontation with the traffic enforcer, as his passengers were also becoming afraid of the drunk policeman.

Aslor said that he never got his license back, after the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and the Traffic Enforcement Group told him that they never received his license.

In July 1998, the MMDA Traffic Adjudication Board exonerated Aslor from the obstruction charges. He filed his complaint against Penilla as the loss of his driver's license led to loss of his employment.

Judge Marquez, in his decision, also banned Penilla from ever working as a government employee.

3 WPD units on the trail of cop killers

By Leila Salaverria

BENT on arresting the killers of P01 Michael Dennis Corpuz, Western Police District officials have assigned three units to the case.

Spokesperson Chief Insp. Gerry Agunod said the WPD units—police station 5 under Supt. Araceli Hofilena, the District Intelligence and Investigation Division under Supt. Edgar Danao, and the homicide unit under Chief Insp. Juanito Taluban—are now working together to uncover leads in the Corpuz case since there were no witnesses to the killing.

Corpuz, 32, on Sunday night was shot to death when he allegedly tried to accost suspicious looking men on board a white taxi in Malate, Manila.

Corpuz, 32, who was assigned to the Sta. Monica community precinct under Station 5, was believed to have been killed by robbers, Agunod said.

The death of Corpuz and the growing crime rate, which is seen to lead up to the Christmas season, prompted WPD Director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong to reactivate a special anti-crime unit.

Bulaong also ordered the 11 station commanders to personally oversee the security of their respective areas, even to go on patrol themselves, according to Agunod.

"The station commanders were told to get out of their air-conditioned offices and go around their areas of responsibility," Agunod said in an interview yesterday.

Judge suspended for bad words

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

DON'T say bad words.

Caloocan City Regional Trial Court Judge Antonio Fineza probably should have kept those few words in mind and avoided a six month suspension meted out by the Supreme Court.

The high court suspended Fineza of branch 131 for calling one lawyer "sinungaling" (liar) and another "bakla" (gay).

His actions, according to the Supreme Court, constituted abuse of authority.

Aside from his "arrogant and intemperate language," which the high court stressed was "not the proper decorum expected of judges," Fineza was suspended for acting with "malice and bad faith" when he raised the bail of an accused from P5,000 to P200,000 to P1 million.

The suspension came as an offshoot of a complaint filed by Radelia Sy on May 22, 2001.

Sy, who was then facing trial for estafa before Fineza's sala, accused the judge of "bribery, grave misconduct, conduct unbecoming of a judge and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service."

Sy alleged that Fineza demanded P300,000 from her in exchange for dismissing the case against her.

When she failed to pay the complete amount, Fineza began harassing her by raising her bail.

Fineza was also alleged to have called one of Sy's lawyers as a "liar" when he saw the lawyer in the court's hallway and described another lawyer as "gay" in one of his written comments.

TRUCK driver Jaime Pangilinan relies on an oxygen mask to help him breathe while rescuers work to pull him out of the 10-wheel wreck that crashed into a tricycle, killing the driver, in Pasig City. RANDY HORMILLOSA

Family waits in vain for tricycle driver killed in Pasig City crash

By Luige del Puerto

A POOR family on Monday night waited for the man of the house to come home. They waited in vain.

"We always ate together, as a family," said Rosanna Donos, 35, wife of Joselito Donos, a tricycle driver, and resident of Barangay San Miguel, Pasig City.

"We wondered what was taking (Joselito) so long (to come home)," Rosanna said. "Then someone got to us and told us my husband had died in an accident."

Joselito was killed when a 10-wheel truck belonging to Martian Steels Corp., lost its brakes, hit two vehicles, and rammed into the victim's tricycle on C. Raymundo Street, Barangay Sagad at around 8 p.m. Monday.

Eight other people were seriously injured in the freak accident, the third major road mishap in less than a week in Eastern Metro Manila.

Those injured were Mariz Lumakang, 16, Roy Bolasito, 22, Christopher Toquero, 23, Celestino Bosano, 26, Malou Gabriel, William Ursua, and Enrico and Ma. Cecilia Tanghal.

At the police station yesterday, Rosanna wondered aloud what would happen to her family now that Joselito was gone.

"We have seven children, and the youngest is just two years old," she said. "I don't know what to do."

A policeman said family members could not see to Joselito's death certificate because they have no money.

Behind bars, truck driver Jaime Pangilinan, 32, said he was sorry about the accident.

"I feel so bad," he said. "I was just trying to earn an honest living, and I hurt some people."

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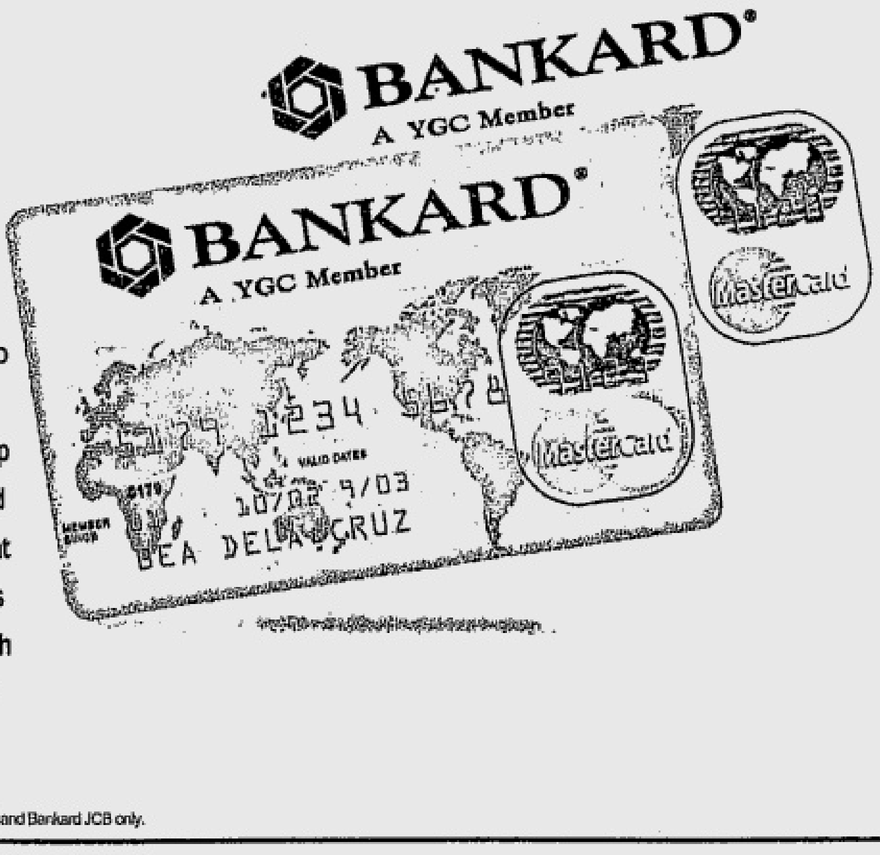

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Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA-Nuggets vs Pacers; 8 a.m. (r-8 p.m.); Solar Sports—Rookie sensation Carmelo Anthony leads his Denver teammates as they visit Reggie Miller and Indiana in this battle of former ABA squads.

Vintage NBA; 11 a.m.; Solar Sports—Take a look back at the career of the NBA's Goliath, Wilt "the Stilt" Chamberlain.

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SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**
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Antigraft body takes over PSC lifestyle check

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE LIFESTYLE check on the top officials of the Philippine Sports Commission has been elevated from the Commission on Audit to the powerful Presidential Anti-Graft Commission.

PUENTEVELLA

This was revealed yesterday by Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella, who had initiated the review of the assets and liabilities of the PSC officials led by chair Eric Buhain and seven of his close associates last September.

Puentevella, head of the House committee on youth and sports, said the antigraft body "is in a better position" to investigate the alleged discrepancies of the PSC officials' paycheck with their supposedly lavish lifestyle. He stressed that the probe didn't die down, instead it was revived in a more competent venue.

The PAGC, headed by Dario Rama, is in the forefront of a Malacañang drive to eliminate graft and corruption in government.

The lifestyle check came after flashy cars allegedly owned by Buhain and his so-called "Magnificent Seven" started appearing at the PSC parking lot.

The seven Buhain associates are spokesperson Arsenic Lacson, executive director Ed Mateo, executive assistants Ike Buan and Sean Solis, grassroots sports development chief Ariel Paredes, sports venues administrator Ramon Suzara and Dennis Rivera of PSC administration.

Puentevella said the PAGC will "fast-track the probe and bring out the truth."

New PBA format okayed for 2004

By June Navarro

EXCEPT for the two-conference championship, the PBA Board of Governors yesterday approved commissioner Noli Eala's proposal to overhaul next year's format along with the plan to extend the league's international commitment to the Asian Basketball Confederation tournament.

At the same time, PBA chairman Jun Cabalan announced that the league would seek P3 million in damages from IBC-13 for each playdate that the station fails to telecast, as stipulated in the contract signed with the NBN-IBC consortium at the start of the current season.

IBC-13 has already missed two telecasts due to what it said was the failure of NBN to pay overdue airtime to the station.

Eala said a two-conference format would be held next year to replace the three-conference schedule, played since 1975, when the league started with eight teams from the old MICAA.

The format, which will have an all-Filipino and an import-spiced conference, guarantees each team at least 36 games for the entire season.

Eala had wanted only a single tourney, the way the US National Basketball Association does it.

The usual February to December calendar was shelved in favor of Eala's proposed schedule—beginning in October and ending in May—to conform with the Fiba calendar.

Eala said the months of July to September would serve as off-season to give the league some flexibility to accommodate the national team, which the league will support not only in the Asian Games but also in the ABC. The latter is the qualifying tournament for the Olympics.

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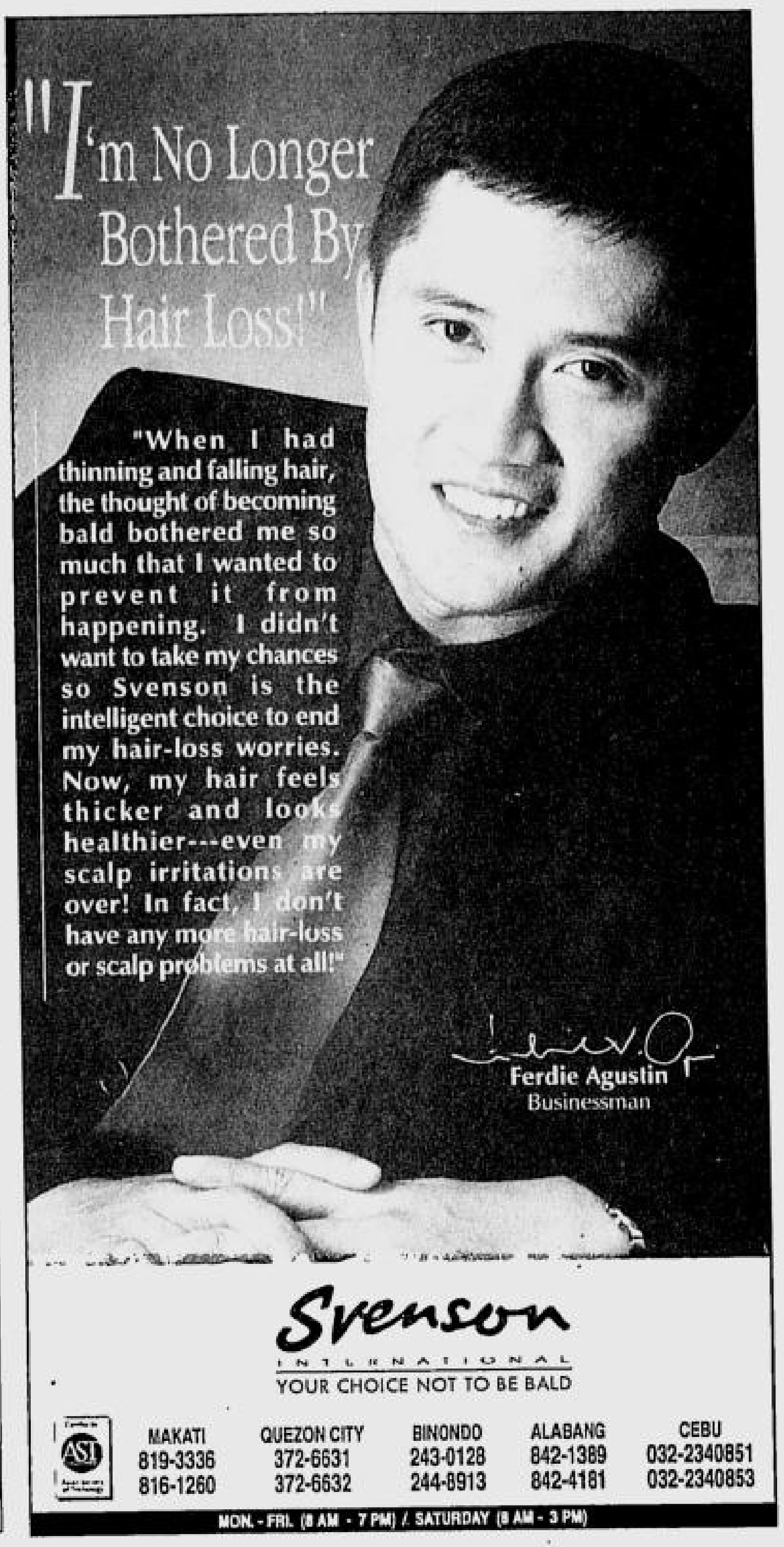

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BAP confident of Fiba support

THE BASKETBALL Association of the Philippines (BAP) won't blink in its raging battle with the Basketball Association of the Philippines Inc. (Bapi)—as long as it continues to enjoy the support of the International Basketball Federation (Fiba).

In a three-pronged stand presented in yesterday's PSA Forum at the Manila Pavilion, BAP officials claimed they are duly recognized as the governing body for the sport by both Fiba and the Asian Basketball Confederation (ABC), something which Bapi doesn't have.

"National Sports Associations (NSAs) exist because of the recognition bestowed upon them by their respective international federations," stressed BAP executive vice president Christian Tan during the public sports program sponsored by Red Bull, Agfa Colors and Pagcor.

Also at the same forum, assistant coach Dong Vergeire announced the lineup of the men's basketball team for the Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam.

Named to the squad were Celino Cruz, Dennis Madrid, Paul Artadi, James Yap, Willie Wilson, Richard Melencio, Gary David, Rich Alvarez, Ranidel de Ocampo, Irvin Sotto, Ricky Calimag, Mark Pingris and alternates Wesley Gonzales and Allan Salansang.

The Bapi, under Nic Jorge, has been declared by the Court of Appeals as the rightful cage body in the country on the basis of its incorporation with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Top seeded Japanese ousted

UNSEEDED Korean Kim Ji Young pulled off 6-3, 4-6, 6-0 upset of top seed and world No. 384 Maika Ozaki of Japan yesterday at the start of the first leg of the Union Cement-International Tennis Federation Women's Circuit at the Ynares Socio-Civic Center in Pasig City.

Taiwanese Hwang I-hsuan, also unranked, joined Kim in the second round after ousting sixth seed Lam Po-Kuan of Hong Kong, 6-1, 6-2.

Other winners were fifth seed Japanese Mari Inoue over compatriot Misae Sakai, 6-3, 6-1, and Korean Kim So-Jung over local wild card Anna Patricia Santos, 7-6 (4), 6-2.

In doubles play, Indonesian top seeds Liza Andriyani and Diana Julianto blasted local wild cards Alyssa Anne Labay and Noelle Conhita Zoleta, 6-0, 6-0, while American Julianna Gates and Polish Monika Krauze defeated Taiwanese Chen Yi and Wang I-ting, 6-4, 6-2, to advance to the second round of this event supported by the ITF Grand Slam Development Fund, Wilson balls, Viva Mineral Water and Holiday Inn Manila Galleria.

Filipina wild cards Czarina Mae Arevalo and Alyssa Anne Labay and No. 2 Wang I-Ting of Chinese Taipei plunge into action today.

Alaska guns for last slot vs Ginebra

ALASKA shoots for an outright quarterfinal seat when it meets Barangay Ginebra even as Red Bull Barako goes for the top seeding in Group B today in the final elimination playdate of the Samsung-PBA Reinforced Conference at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Sporting a 4-8 record, the Aces hope to avoid a playoff with the Purefoods TJ Hotdogs (4-9) for the last slot in Group A by hurdling the Gin Kings in their 7:30 p.m. tussle.

The red-hot Barakos collide with the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals in the 5 p.m. curtain-raiser hoping to secure the No. 1 quarterfinal seeding in Group B with a 10th straight victory.

The Barakos (10-2) had earlier waylaid the Coca-Cola Tigers (11-2) to move into position to steal the top spot from the Tigers in the quarterfinals.

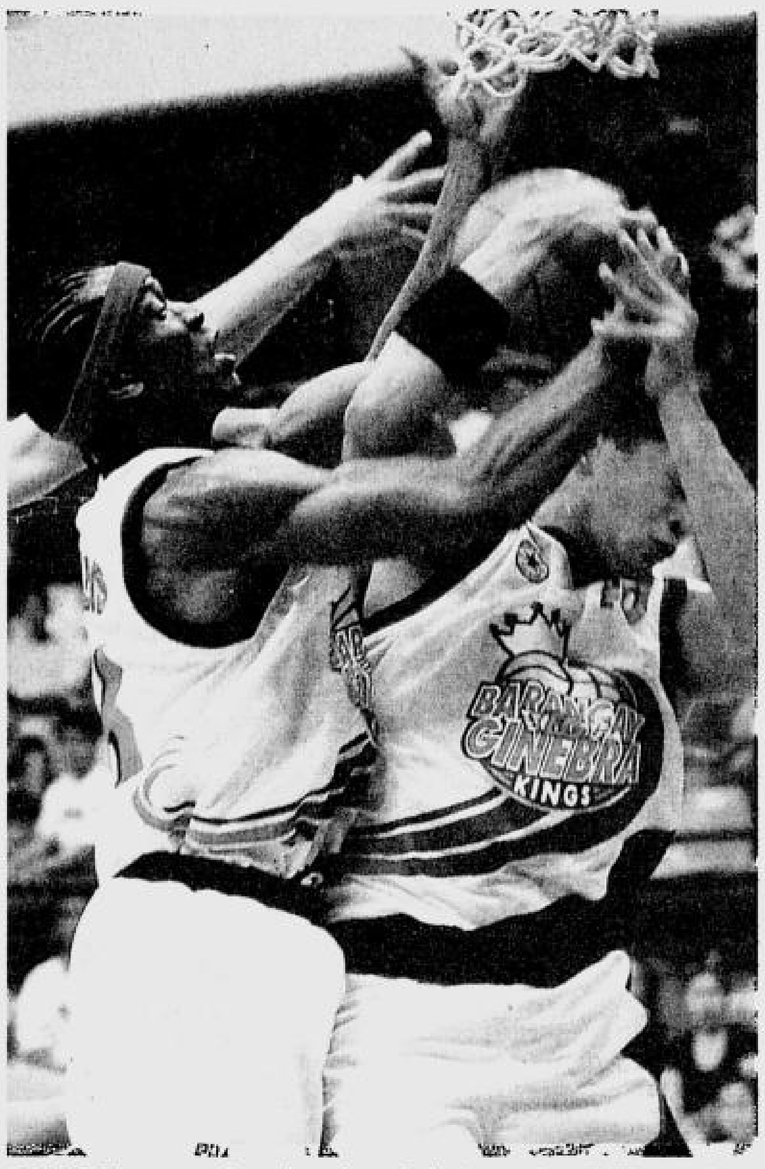
With Ali Peek and Brandon Cablay out with injuries, the Aces will have to rely on John Arigo, Don Allado, Mike Cortez, Migs Noble, EJ Feihl, Stephen Padilla and Isaac Fontaine to get past the Gin Kings.

Peek, Alaska's top local scorer, underwent surgery recently to remove fluids on his left knee while Cablay, the playoff MVP when the Aces won the Invitationals last month, is recuperating from a hyperextended right knee.

The Gin Kings, who got a big boost from Rossel Ellis, are already in the quarterfinals along with Talk 'N Text.

The Gin Kings own a 6-6 record behind the Phone Pals' 7-5 card.

June Navarro



GINEBRA is expected to rely again on flashy import Rossel Ellis, seen here controlling the rebound with teammate Rommel Adducul. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

SPORTSWATCH

Grachiya-Adamson debuts vs Snipers

NEWLY crowned University Games champion Grachiya-Adamson makes its debut in the 2003 Panasonic NBL Regional Cup tournament today when it faces another newcomer, the Ilocos Sur Snipers, at 3:30 p.m. at the Adamson University gym. Coached by Luigi Trillo, the Grachiya-Adamson squad is slightly favored over the Snipes after its rousing success in the Unigames, where it beat UAAP champion FEU. NBL secretary general Tito Palma said Adamson's feat makes the team a big threat to NBL top guns like defending champion Ozamiz City and back-to-back titlist M. Lhuillier Kwarta Padala-Cebu.

1,500 young jins vying in Petron meet

ABOUT 1,500 boys and girls are expected to vie for honors in the 2003 Petron National Age Group Taekwondo Championships on Nov. 8-9 at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium. According to Philippine Taekwondo Association president Robert N. Aventajado, this event has lured age group participants 14 years and below from PTA-affiliated schools, chapters and branches throughout Metro Manila, other cities and provinces. Sung Chon Hong, PTA vice president and chair of the organizing committee, said the meet, also supported by the Philippine Sports Commission and Milo, is part of PTA's grassroots program.

Balce, Lagman gain last-8 in PCA netfest

ATENEO'S Mark Balce and Cebuano Jacob Lagman barged into the quarterfinals of their respective divisions yesterday in the PCA Open Juniors Tennis Championships at the PCA courts. Balce upset third seed Gerard Michael Ngo, 6-1, 6-4, to join Pablo Olivarez Jr., Patrick Arevalo, Marvin Serito, Bobby Chio, Leyan Moncera and Ryan Daza in the last eight of the boys' 14-under division. Lagman, on the other hand, blasted Tsutomi Fukishima, 6-0, 6-0, to advance to the unisex 10-under quarterfinals against fourth seed Noel Agra, a 6-1, 6-2 winner over Ronnel Santiago. Also advancing were Kyle Cordero, Dheo Talatayod, Jose Lorenzo Ferrer, JV CUstodio and Juan Pocholo Macalino.

Casey, Gilles Milo doubles champs

CAGAYAN DE ORO—Local netter Francis Casey Alcantara beat Noelito Pacana, 6-2, 6-2, in the boys' 12-under class then whipped Juke Alban, 6-2, 6-4, in the 14-under bracket to become one of the only two doubles winners in the 2003 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop at the Nazareth Tennis Club here. Francis Derrick Alcantara, Francis Casey's younger brother, ruled the unisex 10-under with a 6-3, 6-4 win over Gabriel Melendez in this Milo netfest organized by CTW and supported by Wilson balls, Adidas and NBN-4's Sunday TV show Sports Kids. Honey Mae Gilles defeated Lani Enriquez twice, 6-3, 6-1 in the girls' 12-under and 6-2, 6-2, in the 14-under classes to duplicate Alcantara's feat. The tandem of Francis Casey and Francis Derrick shared the limelight with Juv Alban in the boys' 16-under. Other winners were Charles Sagrado (18-under), Irene Serito (16-under) and Kindy Mae Rosales (18-under).

Negros gamefowl breeders collide

IT'S signal no. 4 in roosterland today as the Negros Gamefowl Breeders Association and the Gamefowl Breeders Association of Negros, two of the country's oldest breeders' groups, collide at the Negros Coliseum in a joint elimination derby to decide who will carry the Negros Island banner in the Bakbakan 2003 8-Stag National Derby championships on Nov. 22, 24 and 26 at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, Quezon City. Considered as the local pioneers of commercial gamefowl breeding, the Negrenses will field in their finest young roosters in the derby sponsored by Thunderbird Platinum and Enertone. Meanwhile, NGBA president Juancho Aguirre and GF-BAN head Freddie Yulo will talk about the derby in today's Thunderbird Balitang-Bakbakan at 9:30 a.m. on dzRH.

Natividad, Rivera wrap up Toby's titles

FAR Eastern University's Mark Natividad and Chona Rose Rivera topped the 18-under division of the Toby's Age-Group Badminton Championships Monday at the SM Megamall Activity Center.

Natividad captured the boys' singles title over schoolmate Wilmer Frias, 15-9, 15-12. Natividad later combined with UP's Marlon Villarin to take the doubles plum over Frias and Michael Paclibar of Pasay City South High, 15-17, 15-10, 17-15.

Rivera defeated Jollylin Rodil of La Salle, 11-6, 11-2, for the girls' singles title and then partnered Rodil to beat Jamelee Vicencion of St. James and Jennalyn Vicencio for the doubles title, 15-7, 15-3.

In the 16-under singles, Maiqui Laurel of Assumption-VVCC triumphed with a 11-6, 9-11, 11-4 decision over Jerty Kagalingan.

Laurel and Samantha Huang outplayed Regina Reyes of San Isidro and Jerty Kagalingan, 15-7, 15-8, to pocket the girls' doubles title in this weeklong event sponsored by adidas, Carlton, Wilson, RSL, Prince, Gosen, KFC, SM Shoemart, 103.5 K-lite, Taraflex and the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

The boys' singles title went to Kevin Tim Ang of Roosevelt-PNP, who beat Dave Moldogo of Green Court Badminton Club, 15-5, 15-7.

Renz Gesmundo and Winston Aquillo downed Antonino Gadi and Jobett Co, 15-13, 15-13, for the boys' doubles title, while Jobett Co and Karyn Velez of St. Paul rallied past James Mark Marcos and Jerty Kagalingan, 8-15, 15-13, 15-10, for the mixed doubles plum.

Distress calls to PSC, Asa-Phil, GAB

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

(RELEVANCE: The honoree, writer Dominador Mirasol, a silent type, would've been rendered totally speechless during the necrological rites at the cramped St. Joseph Hall of the Funeraria Oro on G. Tuazon Street in Sampaloc. This was on Monday, shortly after a downpour choked the city, stranded and stalled several Mirasol admirers, including National Artist for Literature Nick Joaquin and poet Pete Lacaba. An SRO crowd listened in awe and reverence to the sincere, spontaneous eulogies that had everybody, mainly members of Mirasol's family, rediscovering Mang Domeng, a multi-awarded giant in Filipino literature who honestly championed the cause of the working class. Mirasol, 63, whose timeless works have become a component of our culture, was buried in Bulacan yesterday. Indeed, nobody among those present could dispute the fact that the honors bestowed him inside a simple, scentless room at the funeral parlor were fit for a national artist, which Mirasol truly is. Not a single line of his passing was carried in the newspapers, but practically everybody who wanted to view quiet greatness and pay homage to dignified literary dedication were there to bid this dear friend, poet, novelist, journalist, teacher, lover, revolutionist a poignant farewell.)

***

THIS distress call reached us Monday morning: No salary again at the end of the month, this has become habitual. (*"Wala na naman kaming suweldo ngayon katapusan, palagi na 'yan."*)

The cry came from a leader of the athletes and coaches group down there at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

It was not too different from the protest text message sent us over 15 days ago after the Philippine Sports Commission, for the first time, failed to pay the salaries of its employees and give allowances to national athletes.

Last time out, the PSC, through its media officer, said the pay mess was caused by the failure of Pagcor to remit its contribution to the national sports funding agency on time.

It was unclear, as of press time yesterday, whether or not aggrieved national athletes and coaches, together with PSC employees, would no longer be missing their meals.

There were reports heads of national associations had to again borrow money in order to feed and fuel athletes currently training for the Southeast Asian Games in December.

Through it all, one disturbing detail came out of this latest money mess at Rizal Memorial.

Media men, who covered the Palarong Pambansa in Tubod, swore the chief PSC moneybag, duty-bound to keep watch over the national games, was often seen in Cagayan de Oro.

Reason: unlike in sleepy Lanao, night life, sweet, swings in far-off Cagayan.

***

Also from the RMSC, another distress call.

This time, concerned sports figures were asking why news of Rep. Harry Angping's ouster as president of the Amateur Softball Association of the Phlippines (Asa-Phil) has not come out in the papers.

We were told that the Asa-Phil board effectively unseated Angping in its last meeting.

"Yesiree, he was ousted through legal board action," said softball great Boy Codiñera, who has been spearheading moves for urgent changes in the local softball setup.

Based on the constitution, said our reliable informer, a majority of the nine-man board could remove the softball association president through a loss-of-confidence vote.

Mentioned as precedent was the manner Codiñera, through a board decision, had taken over from Rolly Rivera as Asa-Phil head.

Maybe the Philippine Olympic Committee was still reviewing and validating the Asa-Phil board action.

However, people displeased with Angping's handling of association funds and affairs suspect the Manila solon had twisted arms to prevent news of his supposed ouster from coming out.

***

Third, and definitely not the least, was this cry from Sen. Aquilino Pimentel.

One of our favorite lawmakers, Pimentel wanted to stop the sport of boxing.

He said boxing should be banned because its brutal nature could cause death to fighters.

Pimentel was forced to throw that hefty punch following the death last week of an obscure Mindanao pug that succumbed to brain hemorrhage the morning after he got knocked out.

The victim's name was Freddie Gamay, who eventually died after suffering an 8th-round stoppage in the hands of Robert Gadian in Titay, Zamboanga.

Senator Pimentel, who loves to champion the underdog, had every reason to feel alarmed.

But as his punch for a boxing ban will most likely not land, the good senator may have to revise fight plans.

For starters, he could work for the reform and revitalization of the Games and Amusements Board (GAB).

Ever quick on their feet whenever there's a chance to travel at people's expense, GAB people are often dull, senseless, sleepy sitting ducks when it comes to protecting poor fighters.

In fact, the GAB has been repeatedly charged with exporting battered boxers mainly to Thailand where these poor pugs are fed like cheap, senseless cattle to their foreign foes.

A Philippine boxing commission that could honestly and effectively manage national boxing affairs could be established with a bill sponsored by the very concerned senator.

Makybe Diva takes Melbourne Cup

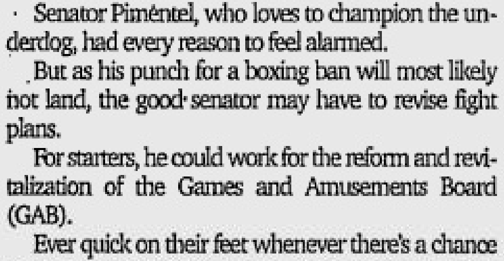
MELBOURNE—Makybe Diva became just the 12th mare to win the 143rd Melbourne Cup, coming from the middle of the field with 200 meters to go in Australia's biggest race Tuesday.

Makybe Diva, ridden by Glen Boss, trained by David Hall and owned by South Australian tuna fisherman Tony Santic, finished ahead of She's Archie and English stayer Jardines Lookout in the US$3.2 million race over 3,200m at Flemington.

Santic named Makybe Diva from an amalgam of his office staff who had backed her previously at odds of 50 to 1. The office staff include Maureen, Kylie, Belinda, Dianne and Vanessa.

The five-year-old mare also upset a big and late plunge on English stayer Mamool, who was backed to win in the hour before the Cup.

More than 100 million Australian dollars (US$70 million) was bet on the race. *AFP*



TRAINER David Hall kisses Makybe Diva after her Melbourne Cup victory. AFP

Barako's lucky charm

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

"THIS guy—Scott Burrell—gets the job done," said multititled coach Yeng Guiao after his rampaging Red Bull Barako squad notched its 10th win in 12 games, hacking out a nerve-frazzling 89-84 victory over the league-leader Coca-Cola Tigers on Oct. 29 at the Philsports Arena. It was the second win for the Photokina franchise against Coca-Cola in this season-ending PBA Reinforced Conference, with Red Bull prevailing, 97-91, in their first meeting on Sept. 26.

And even though he is one of the PBA's lowest-scoring imports in memory, Burrell is not about to be sent home by his team because he sits well with management, headed by the level-headed George Chua, with his good work ethics. By providing leadership and motivation, his teammates, inspired since he arrived some weeks back, have worked harder in scoring Red Bull's record-setting nine straight wins in the series.

Red Bull could grab the No. 1 slot at the end of eliminations from Coca-Cola (11-2) with a victory against the Asi Taulava-led Talk 'N Text quintet this afternoon at the Cuneta Astrodome.

An eight-year veteran of the NBA, who last played with the Charlotte Hornets two years ago, Burrell also saw action with the 1998 NBA champion Chicago Bulls led by the fabulous Michael Jordan. A role player, Burrell can shoot and grab the important rebounds. And he is not a showboat unlike some imports whose behavior sucks, off and on the court.

"The key (to our unbeaten streak) is the arrival of Scott," said the 43-year-old Guiao. "He's a perfect fit for the team."

***

MISSING LINKS. The paragraph in my last column should have read this way: The 35-year-old Archer, playing consistently cool and getting most of the breaks as well, beat luckless Filipino idol Francisco "Django" Bustamante, 13-10, in the race-to-13 finals, sealing the title—outright—by sinking the 9 ball on his turn at the table in rack number 23. Although my other choice, the fabled "Bata" Reyes, did not make it to the finals, I am consoled by the fact that Bata missed that chance only due to the quirks of the quotient system that saw him lose to Bustamante in the tiebreak.

***

'MUST-SEE' DANCESPORT. Ballroom dancing aficionados should not miss this weekend's Manila IDSF (International Dance Sport Federation) Open Pagoda Cup (on Sunday, Nov. 9) and the seventh National Dancesport-Alaxan FR Championships (on Friday, Nov. 7), both at the Philsports Arena.

DSCP president and founder Becky Garcia is inviting the public to watch this year's biggest and most colorful dancesport festival featuring the world-renowned Brasil Tropical Carnival from Brazil during the IDSF Open and four-time undefeated world professional Latin champions Jukka Haapalainen and Sirpa Suutari from Finland during the national championships.

Both events are sponsored by the Philippine Sports Commission, the Philippine Olympic Committee, PCSO, Alaxan FR, Pagoda Philippines of sportsman Ernie Yu, Water Zone, Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, Philippine Star, Savannah Moon, Dance Exchange, ABC 5, Sweet Blooms and Colgate-Palmolive Philippines.

To ensure fairness in the competitions, licensed adjudicators from England, Portugal, Australia, Japan, Thailand, the Czech Republic and Switzerland have been invited to act as judges in the IDSF Open and national championships.

Knicks zap Magic for first win

ORLANDO, Florida—New York held Orlando to a franchise-low 25 percent shooting, and the Knicks won their first game with a 75-68 victory over the Magic on Monday night.

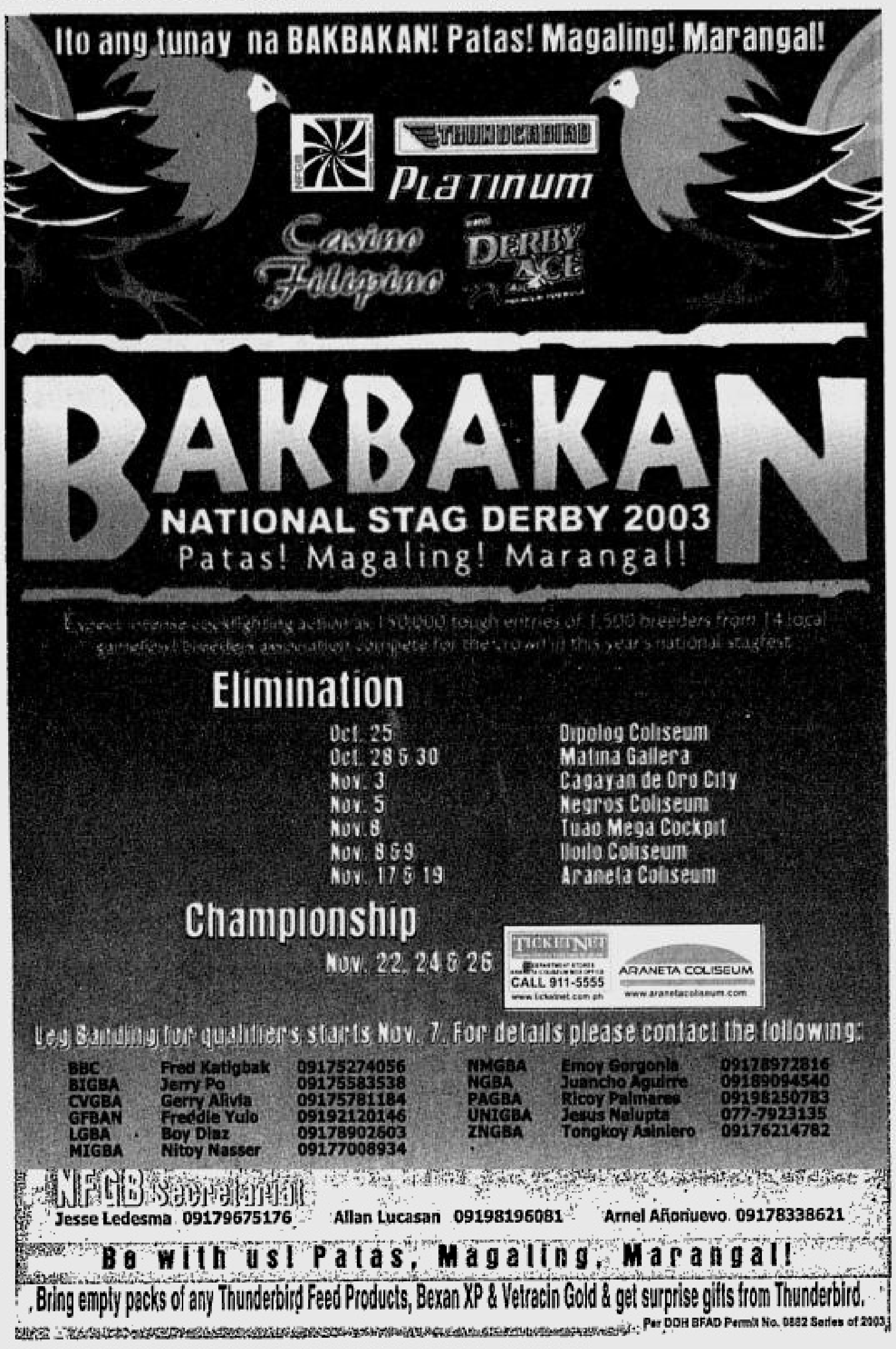
Charlie Ward led New York with 15 points.

In Atlanta, Dion Glover had 20 points as the Hawks beat New Orleans Hornets, 90-80.

In Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki scored 16 in the third quarter as Dallas won, 103-93, over Miami.

In Chicago, Steve Francis scored 19 points to lead Houston to a 98-66 rout of Chicago.

In Memphis, Tennessee, Stromile Swift had 14 points lead Memphis to an 88-80 win over the Tony Parker-less San Antonio. AP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MIGBA	Nitoy Nasser	09177008934
NMGBA	Emoy Gorgonia	09178972816
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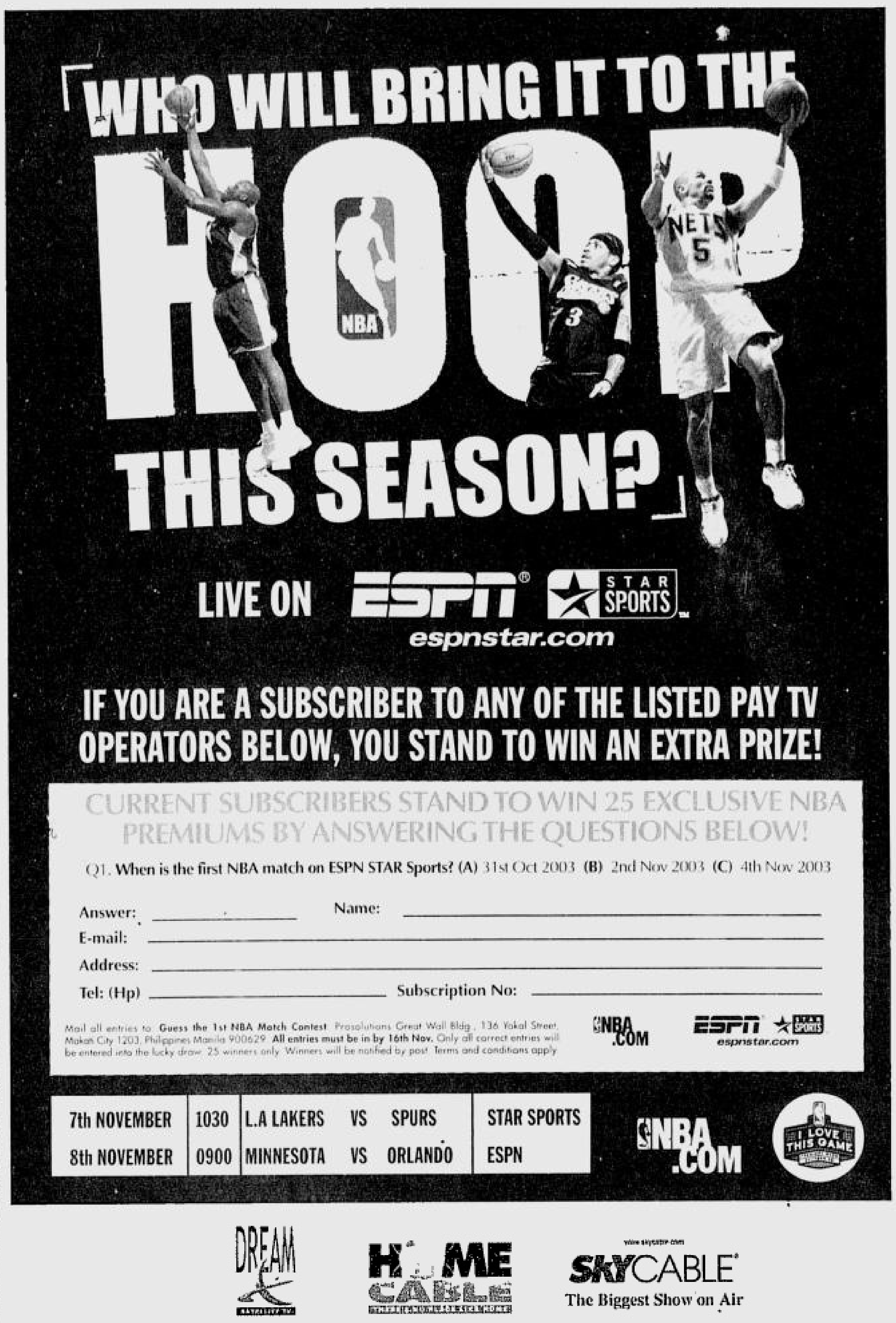
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ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Editor **Louie C. Camino**

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

‘THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS’

Solid, but not spectacular; satisfying, but not outstanding

By Ruel S. De Vera

THE END. The Matrix trilogy, with its now familiar wirework, ends.

“THIS is your last chance,” enigmatic Morpheus (Laurence Fishburne) says in 1999's “The Matrix.” “After this, there is no going back. You take the blue pill and the story ends. You wake up in your bed and you believe whatever you want to believe.”

With “The Matrix Revolutions,” the story does end. The Matrix trilogy, crafted by brainiacs Larry and Andy Wachowski, bullet-times to its fateful conclusion after its intriguing boot-up with “The Matrix” and its overheated sequel, “The Matrix Reloaded.”

In its four years, the Matrix has reformatted our framework of what an action movie should be, spawning the high-concept action-fest as well as a horde of Matrix knock-offs.

It isn't a stretch to say that we have seen, and will continue to glimpse, a bit of “The Matrix” in most action movies since 1999.

Yet the crossover success of “The Matrix” raised expectations for its sequel. Amped up on special effects and the trilogy's philosophical puzzles, “Reloaded” ended on a cliffhanger not only in terms of the storyline itself but also in terms of the trilogy's place in cinema history.

From the very beginning of “Revolutions,” it's apparent that audiences need to have watched “Reloaded” if this movie is to make any sense. Indeed, much of “Revolutions” is spent resolving the plot lines left hanging by the previous movie.

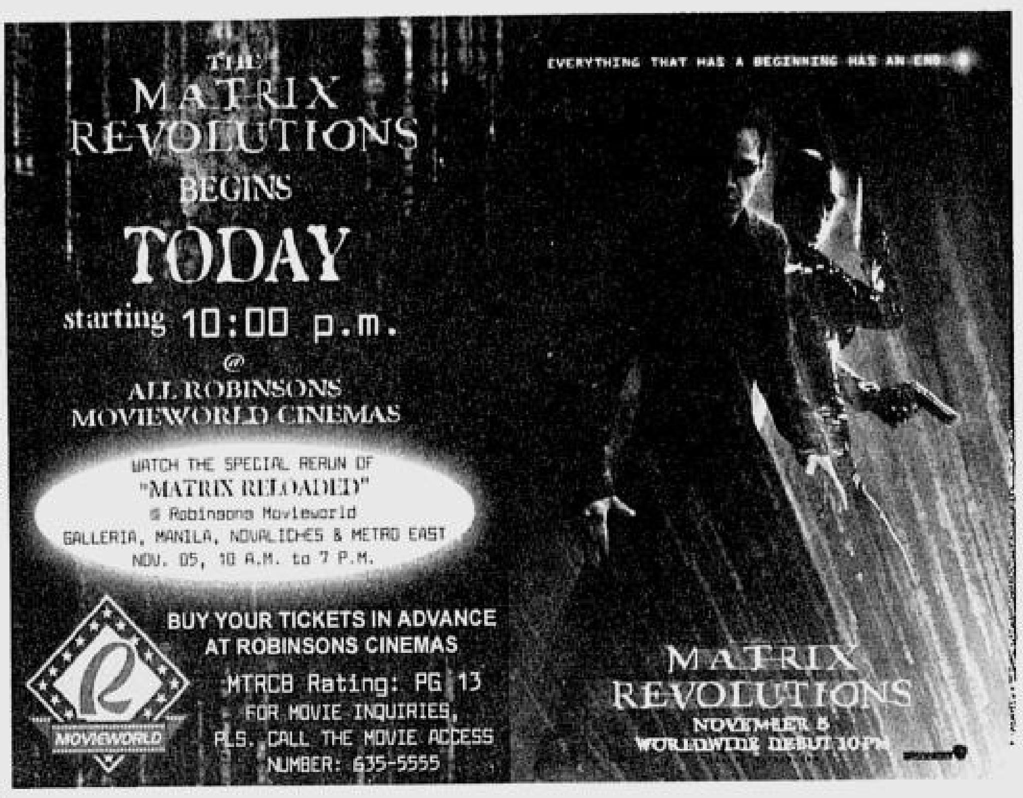
At the end of “Reloaded,” the Machines are relentlessly burrowing their way to the last human stronghold of Zion. The prophecy that Neo (Keanu Reeves) believed in seems to be just another mind game and, after suddenly displaying powers in the real world, Neo falls into a coma.

Meanwhile, the artificial intelligence called Agent Smith (a sneering Hugo Weaving) is infecting more and more parts of the Matrix.

While the first movie was spent mostly in the intricate web of the Matrix and “Reloaded” had Neo's heroes in the Matrix about half the time, “Revolutions” debugs itself almost exclusively in the real world. As the humans prepare to make their last stand against the coming army of insect-like sentinels, Neo and Trinity (Carrie-Anne Moss) decide to take a chance in order to end the war. Will the lovers be able to stop the Machines before everyone in Zion is slaughtered? There's only one way to find out. Log on.

“Revolutions” shakes off the conventional action movie exterior of the first and second movies and emerges in its full-fledged science fiction form. In many ways, it's a classic sci-fi war movie, with the hu-

SOLID/ A29



THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
BEGINS
TODAY
starting 10:00 p.m.
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ALL ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS

WATCH THE SPECIAL RERUN OF
"MATRIX RELOADED"
@ Robinsons Movieworld
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NOV. 05, 10 A.M. to 7 P.M.

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AT ROBINSONS CINEMAS
MTRCB Rating: PG 13
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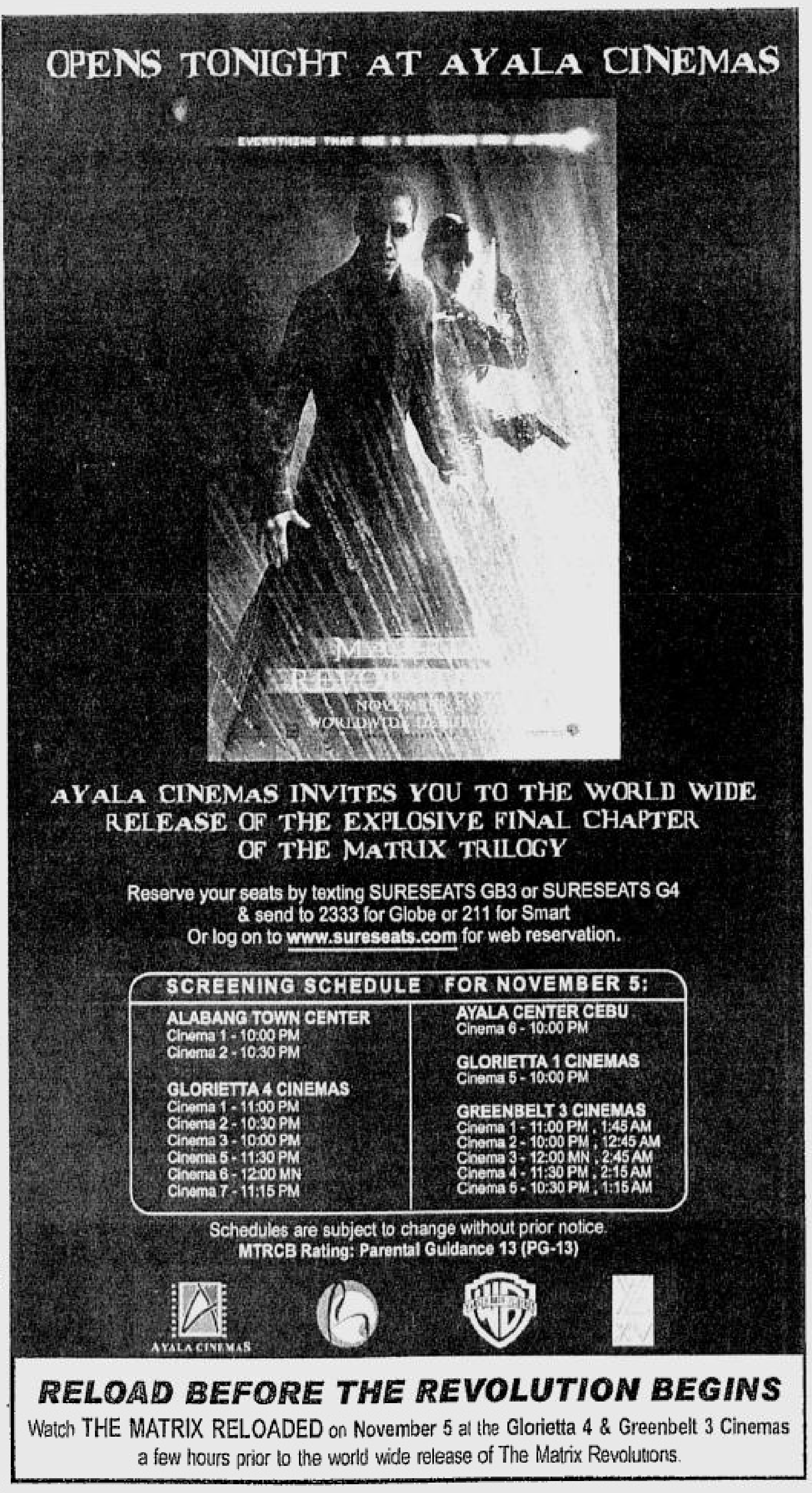

OPENS TONIGHT AT AYALA CINEMAS

AYALA CINEMAS INVITES YOU TO THE WORLD WIDE RELEASE OF THE EXPLOSIVE FINAL CHAPTER OF THE MATRIX TRILOGY

Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4
& send to 2333 for Globe or 211 for Smart
Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservation.

SCREENING SCHEDULE FOR NOVEMBER 5:

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Cinema 1 - 10:00 PM
Cinema 2 - 10:30 PM

GLORIETTA 4 CINEMAS
Cinema 1 - 11:00 PM
Cinema 2 - 10:30 PM
Cinema 3 - 10:00 PM
Cinema 5 - 11:30 PM
Cinema 6 - 12:00 MN
Cinema 7 - 11:15 PM

AYALA CENTER CEBU
Cinema 6 - 10:00 PM

GLORIETTA 1 CINEMAS
Cinema 5 - 10:00 PM

GREENBELT 3 CINEMAS
Cinema 1 - 11:00 PM , 1:45 AM
Cinema 2 - 10:00 PM , 12:45 AM
Cinema 3 - 12:00 MN , 2:45 AM
Cinema 4 - 11:30 PM , 2:15 AM
Cinema 5 - 10:30 PM , 1:15 AM

Schedules are subject to change without prior notice.
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

AYALA CINEMAS

RELOAD BEFORE THE REVOLUTION BEGINS
Watch THE MATRIX RELOADED on November 5 at the Glorietta 4 & Greenbelt 3 Cinemas
a few hours prior to the world wide release of The Matrix Revolutions.

SM CINEMA
NOW SHOWING

THE MATRIX RELOADED
Prepare yourself!
Watch it on the big screen and experience once again its cutting edge action, explosive story and mind-blowing special effects.
(Limited Engagement)

THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
Everything that has a beginning has an end. This is the moment that you have been waiting for. Get ready for the explosive final chapter of THE MATRIX trilogy.
(Buy your tickets in advance)

Starts 10 am
MTRCB Rating: R13

Showing in ALL SM Cinemas
For Screening Schedules Dial 8339999

Starts 10 pm
MTRCB Rating: P13

MATRIX RELOADED

WATCH THE THE FINAL EXPLOSIVE CHAPTER OF THE MATRIX TRILOGY
OPENS TONIGHT (NOV. 5)
STARTING 10 PM
TILL DAWN
GREENBELT 3 CINEMAS
SCREENING SCHEDULE FOR NOV. 5
Cinema 1 (THX) - 11:00 pm, 1:45 am
Cinema 2 (THX) - 10:00 pm, 12:45 am
Cinema 3 - 12:00 mn, 2:45 am
Cinema 4 - 11:30 pm, 2:15 am
Cinema 5 - 10:30 pm, 1:15 am
BUY YOUR TICKETS IN ADVANCE AT THE GREENBELT 3 CINEMA TICKETBOOTH.
OR LOG TO www.sureseats.com FOR WEB RESERVATION.
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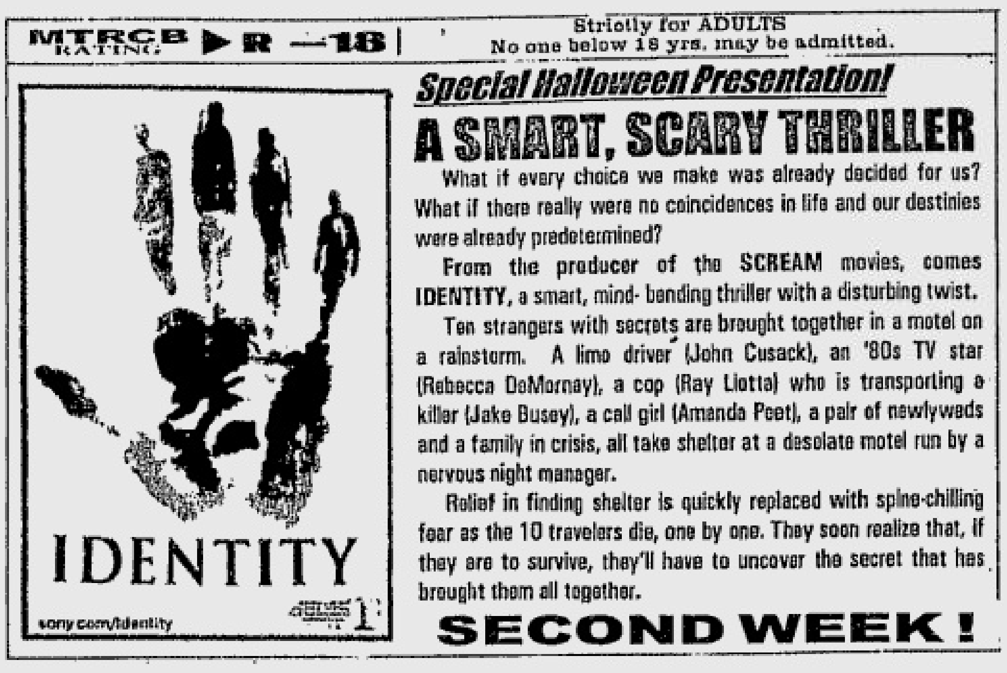
AYALA CINEMAS



MTRCB RATING ▶ R —18
Strictly for ADULTS
No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.

Special Halloween Presentation!
A SMART, SCARY THRILLER

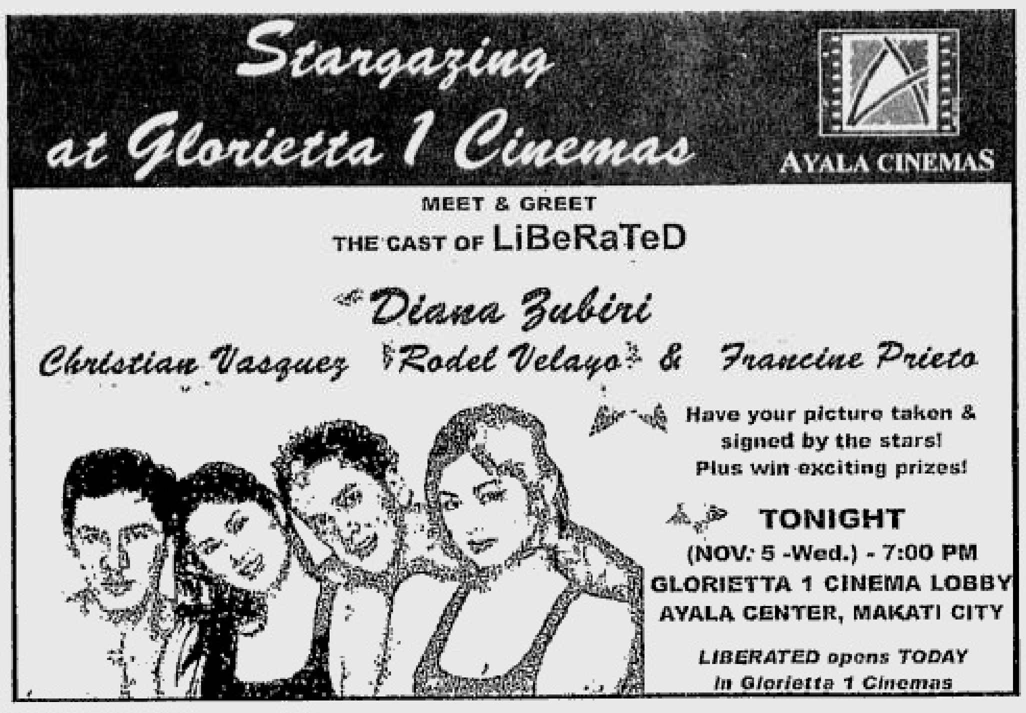
What if every choice we make was already decided for us? What if there really were no coincidences in life and our destinies were already predetermined?

From the producer of the SCREAM movies, comes IDENTITY, a smart, mind- bending thriller with a disturbing twist.

Ten strangers with secrets are brought together in a motel on a rainstorm. A limo driver (John Cusack), an '80s TV star (Rebecca DeMornay), a cop (Ray Liotta) who is transporting a killer (Jake Busey), a call girl (Amanda Peet), a pair of newlyweds and a family in crisis, all take shelter at a desolate motel run by a nervous night manager.

Relief in finding shelter is quickly replaced with spine-chilling fear as the 10 travelers die, one by one. They soon realize that, if they are to survive, they'll have to uncover the secret that has brought them all together.

SECOND WEEK!



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GLORIETTA 1 CINEMA LOBBY
AYALA CENTER, MAKATI CITY
LIBERATED opens TODAY
in Glorietta 1 Cinemas

Solid, but not spectacular; satisfying, but not outstanding

From page A28

mans-versus-sentinels scenes reminiscent of James Cameron's "Aliens" and Paul Verhoeven's adaptation of Robert Heinlein's "Starship Troopers."

Man vs machine

The action scenes in "Revolutions" are, oddly enough, the most conventional of the series. There are no ridiculously overdrawn freeway demolition derbies, no manor house bullet ballets. It's just plain out man-against-machine mayhem. Morpheus, brash captain Niobe (Jada Pinkett-Smith) and the freedom fighters get to let out some cyberpunk aggression.

What isn't simple is the fate of The Prophecy. By now, readers have the same puzzled expression that Neo has been wearing for most of the series. Aside from a new actress playing The Oracle (Mary Alice replacing the late Gloria Foster), the Prophecy takes on a whole new dimension as a new player is introduced, the Machines' Deus Ex Machina (that is not a joke, that is what the machine boss is actually called).

This ploy makes the differences between Zion, the Machine City and the Matrix finally clear.

"It's the question that drives us," Trinity cooed in the first movie. "Revolutions" provides most of the answers viewers have been looking for since the whole thing started.

That, plus the movie's compact structure, makes it unexpectedly straightforward, perhaps even predictable to others. It becomes

SOLID/A30

NEO CLASSICAL. Reeves in another mind game

AGENT SMITH spreads faster than any virus

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
Ali 2	LIBERATED
Ali 3	THE SPY
Ali 4	THE RUNDOWN
Ali 5	MATRIX REVOLUTION
Ali 6	DUCK WATER
Ali 7	IDENTITY

ARANETA COLISEUM	
NOV 9	PBA GAMES
NOV 10	NCA NATIONAL 8-STAG DERBY
NOV 12	NCA NATIONAL 8-STAG DERBY
NOV 14	NCA NATIONAL 8-STAG DERBY
NOV 16	PBA GAMES

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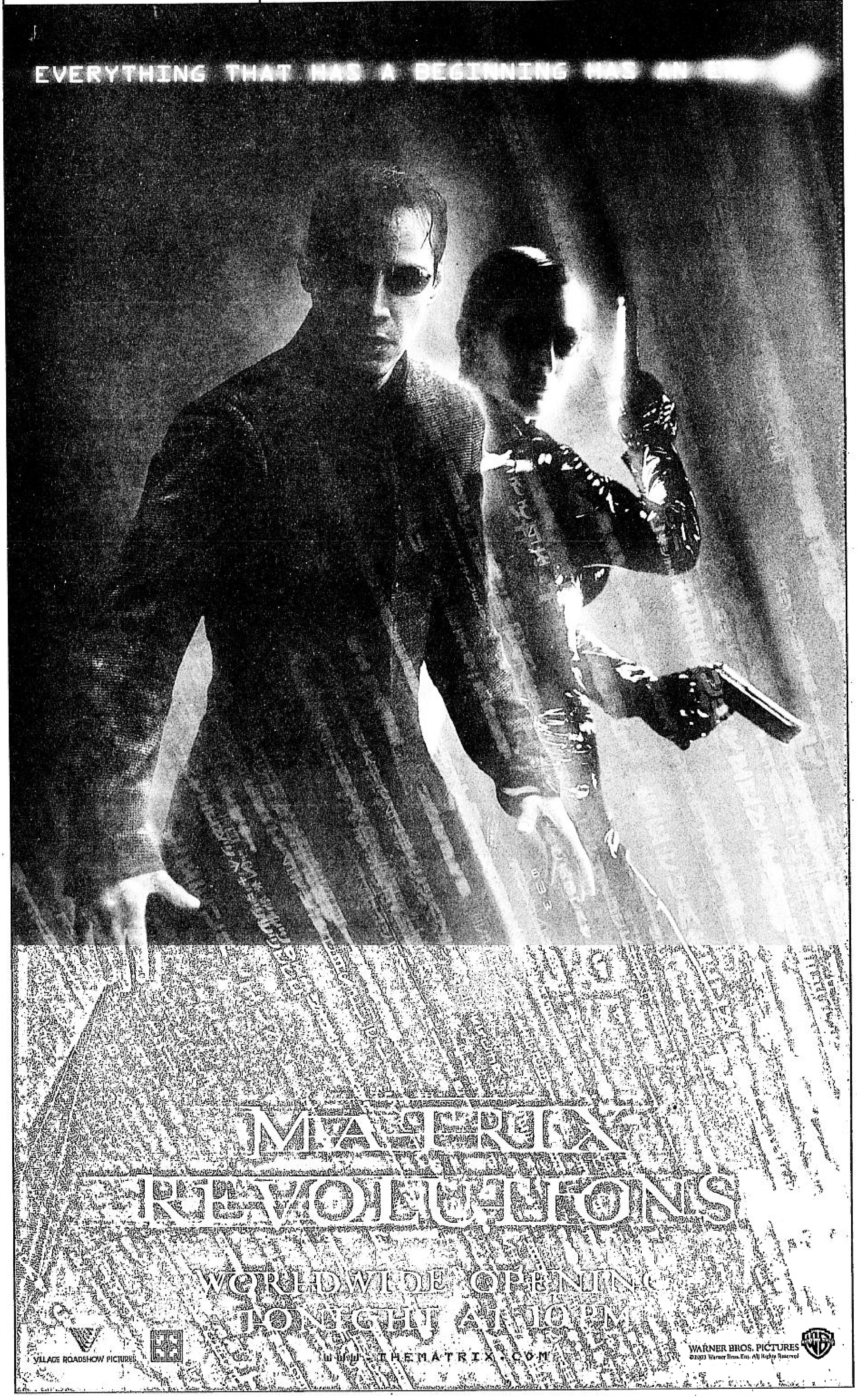
THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	LIBERATED
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	LIBERATED
B	
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
CINEMA-2	MAPUPULANG LABI
CINEMA-3	UTANG NG AMA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BELPHEGOR
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER
CINEMA-6	AMERICAN PIE THE WEDDING
CINEMA-7	BUGBOG SARADO
CINEMA-8	MY FIRST ROMANCE
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	RUNDOWN
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	IDENTITY
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	UPTOWN GIRLS
CINEMA-12	SPY
CINEMA-14	MY FIRST ROMANCE
CINEMA-15	MY FIRST ROMANCE
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PINAS)	RUNDOWN
CINEMA-1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
CINEMA-2	INNER SENSES
CINEMA-4	MATCHSTICK MEN
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult


EVERYTHING THAT HAS A BEGINNING HAS AN E
MATRIX
REVOLUTIONS
WORLDWIDE OPENING
TONIGHT AT 10PM
VILLAGE ROADSHOW PICTURES
WWW.THEMATRIX.COM
WARNER BROS. PICTURES
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Scraping the bottom of the barrel

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE "REALITY," "no guts, no glory" competition, AXN's "Fear Factor," has become populaf with viewers because it awards $50,000 to the contestant who does best at overcoming his fears and meeting the show's daunting and/or yucky challenges.

Trouble is, it's been years since the show garnered great ratings, and televiewers are notoriously fickle and easily bored. So, what more to do to sustain their interest? The show has opted to go yuckier—and yuckier.

Of late, it has, by its own admission, been scraping the bottom of the barrel in terms of all-out, unapologetic yuckiness. Some weeks ago, we stared dumbfounded as that episode's finalists were required to first bite into seven pounds' worth of earthworms, then do the same with one pound of dead roaches, then top it all off by using their teeth to hurl 10 dead rats each into a big can!

The earthworms were tolerable, but the roaches and rats took a lot of gumption. Those contestants must have needed that $50,000 like heck, because they all did it. Of course, the one who did it fastest won. We trust that the first thing he bought with his prize money was an industrial-strength mouthwash!

More recently, the show came up with another yucky test that was also pretty off-putting: Both male and female contestants were required to gobble up some bull, buffalo and elk penises!

Since some of the animals' members were quite a mouthful, the contestants had a really hard time. Of course, the women were relentlessly razzed for their bizarre oral activity, while the men also got it for consorting with such weird appetizers.

Now that "Fear Factor" has become more graphic, prospective contestants have to steel themselves even more to meet its daunting challenges. This is no longer about overcoming fears, but putting even your self-respect on the line.

Of course, none of the contestants is forced to join the show, and a few have indeed dropped out, because they literally couldn't swallow that ghastly "cuisine" that the program served up for them.

The contestants who do not drop out are clearly in the show to win, and are prepared to do anything to beat the similarly determined competition.

We can imagine them "rehearsing" at home for hours and hours, methodically ingesting all sorts of inedible and offensive stuff, and keeping it in for the required length of time, before upchucking everything in one, big, primal hurl.

Of course, other challenges on the program are not all that oral, and instead require contestants to perform extreme feats of agility and derring-do. All of this is meant to encourage contestants and viewers to recognize, face up to and conquer their fears—which is a good thing, except for the fact that most of us didn't even have those fears in the first place, until the show rubbed our noses into them!

> So, what more to do to sustain audience interest? The show has opted to go yuckier—and yuckier.

'Yamani at the CCP'

SULTRY singer **Yamani** performs in her first major concert at the CCP's Little Theater on Nov. 23 and Dec. 2 at 8:30 p.m. She sings every Tuesday and Saturday at the Hyatt's Calesa Bar, Thursday at Richmonde Hotel, and Sunday in the "Can Can" show at Star Theater at Star City. Call 891-5610.

Animated 'Batman'

THE ANIMATED feature, "Batman—Mask of the Phantasm," premieres on the Cartoon Network at 8 p.m. on Nov. 8. A new villain, Phantasm, is introduced, and an old love interest comes back, giving a glimpse into Bruce Wayne's past and the origins of the Batman costume.

'Freaky Friday' soundtrack

THE SOUNDTRACK album of the new "Freaky Friday" movie features musical performances by some cast members.

They include "punkified" covers of some of today's teen favorites, as well as original songs made for the film.

Simple Plan contributes its pop-punk version of the Turtles' hit "Happy Together," while Bowling for Soup puts on Britney hats for a cover of "Baby One More Time." Lillix, the pop-punk quartet, take on The Romantics' "What I Like About You," and Joey Ramone charms with "What a Wonderful World," among other musical highlights.

Character of the Month

HAPPY-GO-LUCKY Billy is the Cartoon Network's Character of the Month for November. His adventures are full of surprises because of his innocent curiosity, which keeps getting him into comedic trouble. He can't always get out of it by himself, but he has friends like Mandy and the Grim Reaper to help him.

WEAVING MAGIC. Hugo Weaving delivers best performance as Agent Smith

Solid, but not spectacular...

From page A29

clear that the Wachowskis, who wrote and directed all three movies, had this all worked out from the beginning, which explains why "Reloaded" was cumbersome and "Revolutions" remarkably shorter, clocking in at just a bit over two hours.

Strongest performance

"Revolutions" clearly carries itself as the concluding chapter, as the Wachowskis hurry to bring the war to an end, much as Neo and the humans wish to do. In the process, they bring back almost, but not all, the characters appearing in the first movies, albeit in surprising differently capacities. Characters you would expect to be playing crucial roles in "Revolutions" wind up limited to one measly scene or not at all, while other, seemingly fringe characters suddenly have a crucial part in "Revolutions."

And while Reeves and Moss get to play the part of lovers in a time of war to the hilt, the strongest performance in "Revolutions'" is Weaving's bit as Agent Smith, now spreading faster than any worm or virus. Weaving's portrayal, in parts hammy and other parts truly scary, grows broader and memorable. As the series' primary antagonist, Smith takes over, perhaps literally, the Matrix in this one.

In many ways, "Revolutions" is the necessary ending and it shows all of its diverse in-

SOLID/A31

There is a videotape.
If you watch it,
seven days later...
you'll die laughing.

SCARY MOVIE 3 #1 for 2nd straight week.

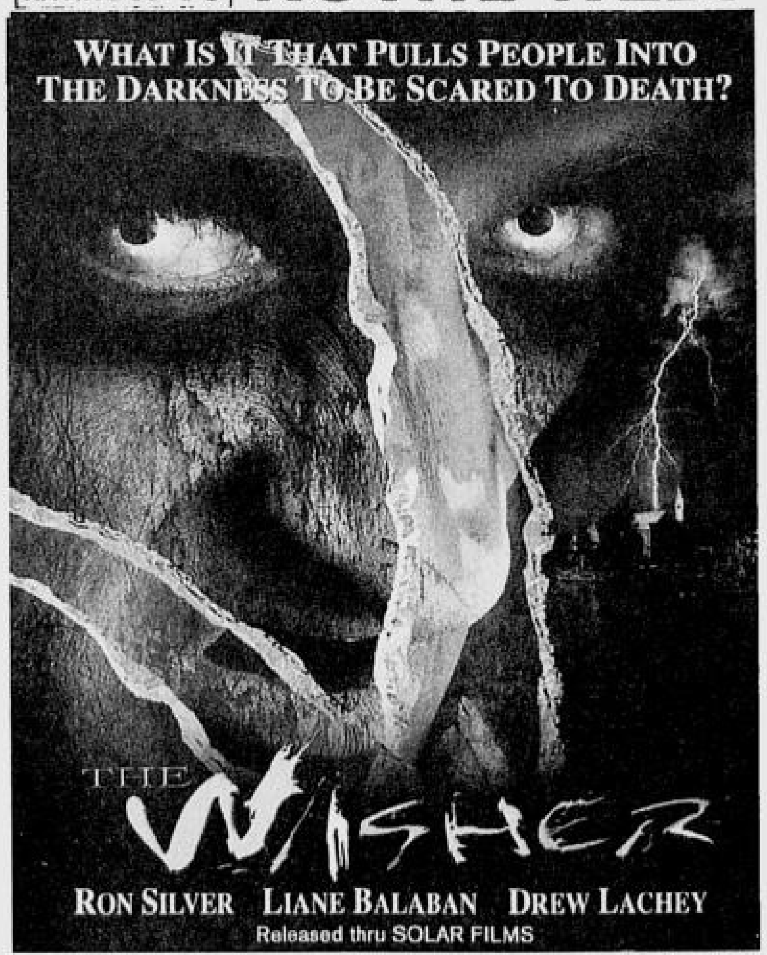
Weekend Box Office (Oct. 31- Nov. 2, 2003)

THIS WEEKEND Scary Movie 3 hung on to the top spot for the second week at the box office this weekend, while most of the movies in the top ten had strong holdovers..

The laugh- till- you- die spoof comedy Scary Movie 3 remained at number one . collecting an estimated 3 -day $21.1M. All you Scary Movie fans out there, Scary Movie 4 is already in the works. With a total cume to date of $78.6M. look for Scary Movie 3 to end its run with around $120-125M.

The film was the biggest October opening in motion picture history.

MTRCB RATING R-13 NOV.12 WED.


WHAT IS IT THAT PULLS PEOPLE INTO THE DARKNESS TO BE SCARED TO DEATH?
THE WISHER
RON SILVER LIANE BALABAN DREW LACHEY
Released thru SOLAR FILMS

#1 GHOST MOVIE IN ASIA!
OPENS NOV. 26
The Grudge
JU-ON
Released thru SOLAR FILMS

ALL DIGITAL SOUND
AYALA CINEMAS
PRESENTS

G1 GLORIETTA 1
1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 THE PHONE / THE MATRIX REVOLUTION (10PM)
3 THE RUNDOWN
4 LIBERATED

G4 GLORIETTA 4
1 IDENTITY / MATRIX REVOLUTION
2 HEAD OF STATE / MATRIX REVOLUTION
THX GUARANTEED SEATS THE RUNDOWN 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45 MATRIX REVOLUTION 10PM
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED
5 UPTOWN GIRLS / MATRIX REVOLUTION
6 MY FIRST ROMANCE / MATRIX REVOLUTION
7 MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER / MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

GB1 GREENBELT 1
ArtFilm
1 UPTOWN GIRLS 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7:35, 9:45
2 UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30
Onstage
REGINE VELASQUEZ NOV. 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29, 9PM

GB3 GREENBELT 3
THX GUARANTEED SEATS IDENTITY / MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 11:00, 1:45
THX GUARANTEED SEATS HEAD OF THE STATE / MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 11:00, 12:45
GUARANTEED SEATS MATRIX RELOADED / MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 12:00, 2:45
GUARANTEED SEATS UPTOWN GIRLS / MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 11:30, 2:15
GUARANTEED SEATS THE RUNDOWN / MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
THX THE SPY / MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 IDENTITY / MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3 UPTOWN GIRLS
4 THE RUNDOWN
5 MY FIRST ROMANCE

For sreening times, call 729-7777. Movies are subject to change without prior notice.
Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 and send to 2333.
Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

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2 (SDDS) THE RUNDOWN
3 (DTS) MY FIRST ROMANCE
4 GOLD AMERICAN PIE THE WEDDING
5 GOLD MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER
6 GOLD (SDDS) IDENTITY
7 GOLD UPTOWN GIRLS
8 MY FIRST ROMANCE
9 THE SPY
10 FREAKY FRIDAY

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2 RESERVE
3 (DTS) RESERVE
4 RESERVE
5 RESERVE
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Golden Pearl THX RESERVE

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1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
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3 LIBERATED

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2 THE SPY
3 THE POSSESSED
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) THE RUNDOWN
5 LIBERATED

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2 MAPUPULANG LABI
3 THE RUNDOWN
4 MY FIRST ROMANCE
5 THE SPY
6 IDENTITY

M star www.clickthecity.com.ph (Las Pinas) tel 873.5004
1 BELPHEGOR
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE

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1 THE RUNDOWN
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC tel 930.9515
1
2
3

Sunshine (FTI, Taguig) TEL. 776-74-21
1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 LIBERATED
3 MY FIRST ROMANCE
4 RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA
Gotesco City (Manila) tel 734.8588
1 (SDDS) RESERVE
4 RESERVE
5 LIBERATED
6 MY FIRST ROMANCE
7 (DTS) IDENTITY
8 (SDDS) THE RUNDOWN
9 (DOLBY) THE SPY
Gotesco Caloocan tel 362.3508
2 RESERVE
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1 MAPUPULANG LABI
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 MY FIRST ROMANCE
4 (SDDS) THE RUNDOWN
5 LIBERATED
6 (DOLBY) BUGBOG SARADO
7 (DTS) BELPHEGOR
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2 (DOLBY) MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 (DTS) THE RUNDOWN
4 (DOLBY) THE SPY
5 MAPUPULANG LABI
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2 LIBERATED
3 (DTS) THE POSSESSED
4 MAPUPULANG LABI
5 (SDDS) THE RUNDOWN

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1 RESERVE

Sampaquita (Cubao) tel 911.7888
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5 (DTS) IDENTITY
6 MAPUPULANG LABI
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2 (DTS) MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 THE RUNDOWN

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El Niño permit canceled

Producer admits inserting unapproved sex scenes

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE CENSORS last Monday canceled a movie outfit's permit to exhibit films after they found it guilty of inserting unapproved sex scenes in some of its movies.

Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) Chair Consoliza Laguardia said El Niño Films' one-year suspension, which started last Oct. 30, was the result of illegal insertions the censors found in "Sagad" and "Malagkit," both El Niño productions.

The MTRCB also banned for one year the exhibition of the two movies in theaters nationwide, as well as on cable and free TV.

During a meeting with the MTRCB adjudication panel last week, El Niño Films' Mila Pascual admitted the insertion of the unapproved sex scenes in the two movies, according to Laguardia.

Pascual requested the board to reduce the suspension from 12 months to only six, Laguardia added.

"We cannot do that because they have already violated MTRCB rules and regulations many times," Laguardia told INQUIRER Entertainment last Monday.

In August, the MTRCB ordered the withdrawal of "Sagad" from theaters nationwide after the censors found at least four sex scenes that were not in the copy of the movie that El Niño Films had submitted to the MTRCB for screening.

In September, the MTRCB also ordered the pullout of "Malagkit" for showing the lead star, Via Veloso, and another bold starlet, Sydney Segovia, engaged in "graphic sex scenes" with their male costars.

In May, questionable sex scenes were also found in the movie "Kikay" involving female lead Maye Tongco and her male costars, prompting the MTRCB to withdraw the movie from theaters.

Laguardia said the MTRCB did not suspend the exhibition of "Kikay" in honor of the "compromise agreement" the board signed with El Niño Films last May.

Laguardia said that as part of the compromise agreement, the board penalized the movie's producer with a three-month suspension of permit to exhibit and a P30,000 fine.

The MTRCB also issued a warning to the producers of the public affairs program "Kontrobersyal" for airing excerpts from "Banatan," a movie with an R-18 rating, last October.

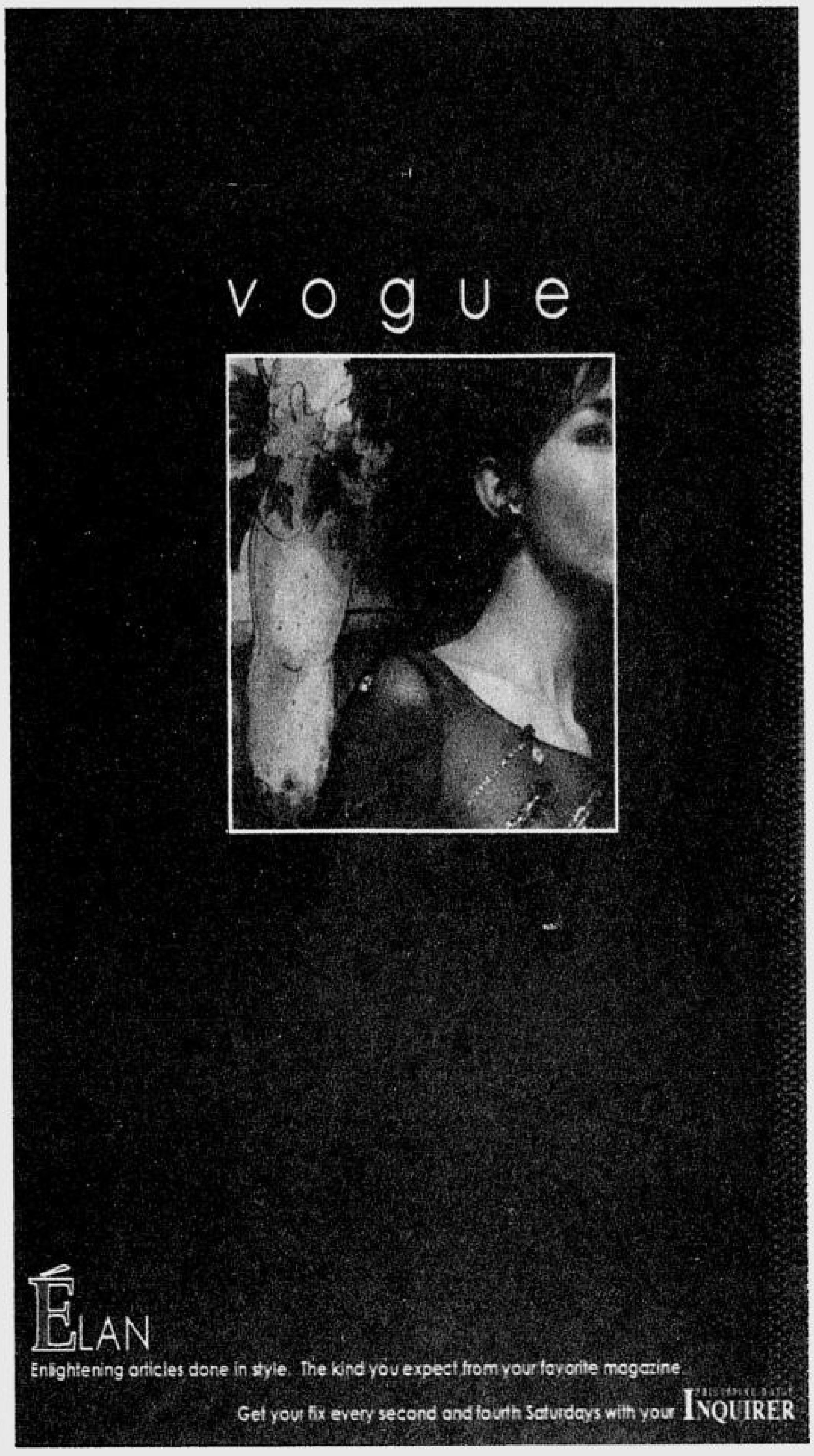
"Kontrobersyal," seen weekly on ABS-CBN, is hosted by Boy Abunda.

"This violates the rule that no movie rated R-18 (by the MTRCB) can be shown on TV unless it is edited to fit the PG Classification," Laguardia explained.

Last Monday, the MTRCB ordered the confiscation of a "tampered" permit to exhibit the movie "Lady of Desire."

Special agents from the MTRCB's monitoring and inspection unit went to Queen Theater in San Fernando, Pampanga, last Oct. 30 to inspect and confiscate the permit as well as five reels of film and several posters.

The memorandum said the production outfit that owns the movie had not registered with the MTRCB.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Solid, but not spectacular...

From page A30

fluences, from Japanese animé (the war machines) to comic books (Neo's superhero moves). Poker-faced messiah Neo becomes more archetypal here, channeling bits from Star Wars' Luke Skywalker and Muad'Dib from Frank Herbert's "Dune." In so doing, the many religious references running through the Matrix series come to a head in "Revolutions," with a resolution that seems obvious but is also audacious because of the risk it takes.

It is an ending viewers will either love or hate.

Additionally, some ambiguous aspects of the ending are guaranteed to leave viewers scratching their heads.

Impossible to do better

By itself, "Revolutions" is a good movie, definitely better than "Reloaded" but still short of "The Matrix." And that is to be expected.

When "The Matrix" loaded up in movie theaters in 1999, we were amazed by how innovative and new everything was. Who would imagine that four years later, the creative wirework of fight choreographer Yuen Wo Ping and the visual arts mastery of John Gaeta would become so familiar? That first movie just set the bar so high, it's virtually impossible for anyone, even the Wachowskis, to make a better "Matrix."

Instead, the Wachowski brothers finally bring viewers decisively out of the rabbit hole with "Revolutions," a solid but not spectacular sci-fi adventure. More significantly, it brings to a satisfying, though not outstanding, end the Matrix trilogy, making its case to be included in the pantheon of sci-fi greats such as "Blade Runner."

The intervening years will see just how the Matrix stacks up.

"I believe deep down, we both want the same thing, we both want this world to change," Neo says to the Machines in "The Matrix."

Indeed, it has. Our time in the rabbit hole is finally up. Consider then, "The Matrix Revolutions," whatever its limitations might be, as a final tour through this twisted wonderland. And yet when that familiar code scrolls across the screen and the music strikes up, you may never want to leave because the Matrix still has you.

Warner Bros.' "The Matrix Revolutions" opens in Metro Manila theaters today.

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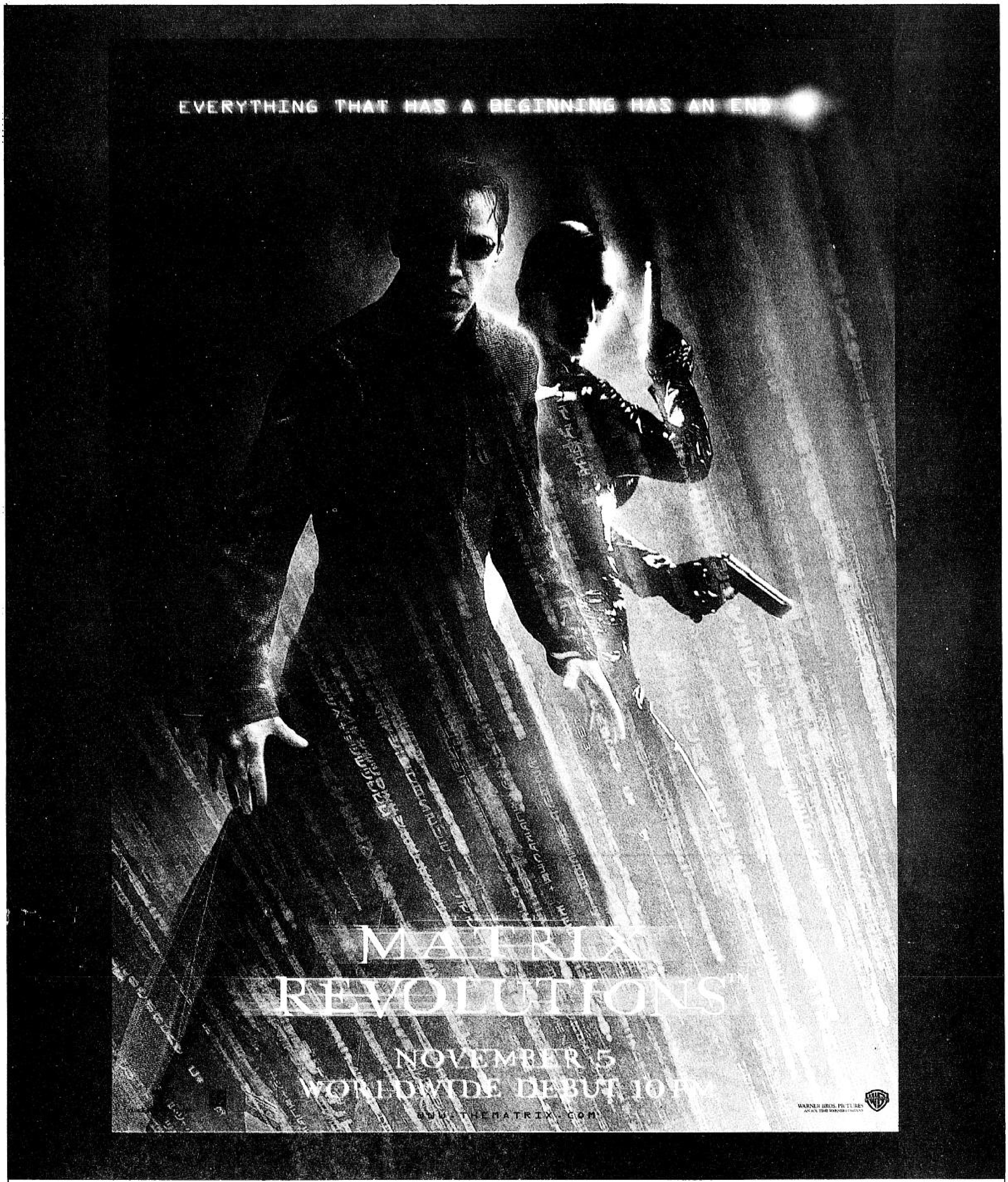
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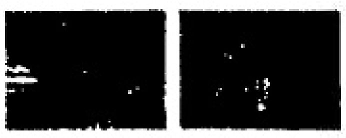
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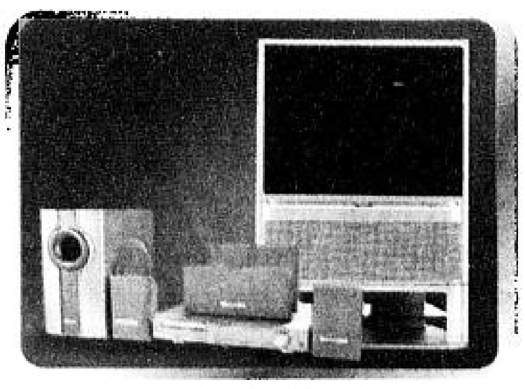

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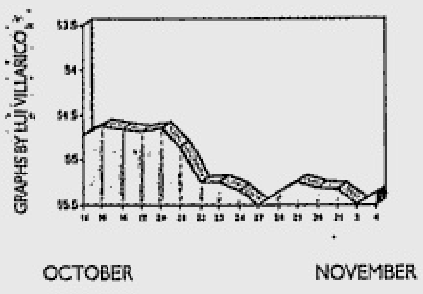

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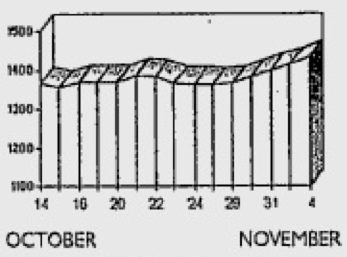
STOCK MARKET

Shares end up on PLDT's gain

THE MAIN Philippine share index ended higher in a mixed session yesterday, setting a 19-month closing high, on foreign demand for select blue chips led by Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended up 20.68 points, or 1.5 percent, at 1432.27, its highest close since April 5, 2002, when it finished at 1432.86.

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



The index rose 0.9 percent Monday and is up 5.5 percent since Oct. 28.

PLDT was the most actively traded stock, up P45, or 5.8 percent, at P825, after the dominant

SHARES/B2

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S exports recovered in September after a two-month slump, due largely to a modest increase in electronics shipments.

National Statistics Office data showed that merchandise exports during the month rose 2.3 percent to $3.26 billion from year-ago level, defying weakness in some neighboring countries.

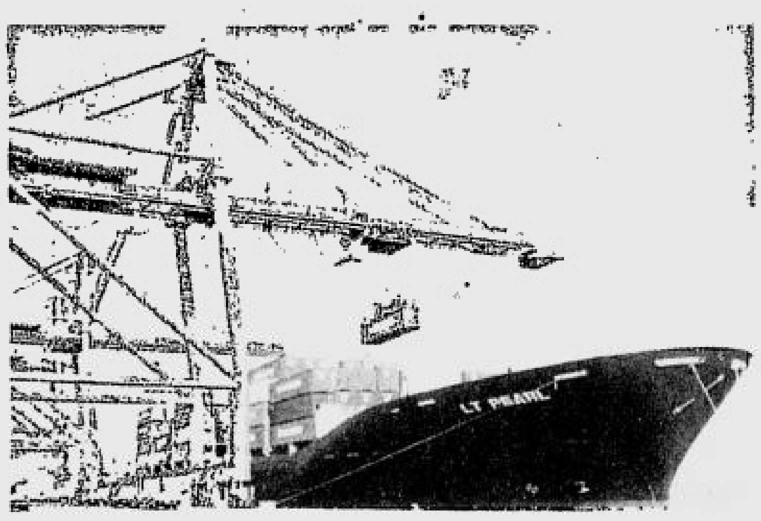
The export performance so far, however, was still short of the the government's reduced growth target of 3 percent for this year. From January to September this year, the country's export receipts increased by only 0.4 percent to $26.27 billion from a year ago.

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, however, yesterday expressed optimism that the country's export performance would strengthen in the fourth quarter of the year.

He said the recovery of the world economy led by the United States would perk up the electronics sector in the fourth quarter.

"Sustained recovery in Asean countries and the seasonal demand for electronics products and other consumer items in the fourth quarter are also expected to boost exports," Neri said.

The National Statistics Office yesterday reported that electronic products, which accounted for 66.2 percent of total export receipts, gained by a marginal 0.9 percent to $2.16 billion in Septem-



PHILIPPINE merchandise being readied for shipment

EXPORTS/B2

Customs Oct. collection exceeds target

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE MACAPAGAL administration is likely to meet its P23-billion budget deficit target for October with the collections of the Bureau of Customs and Bureau of Internal Revenue seen meeting, if not exceeding, targets.

Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo yesterday said that Customs' collections in October reached P9.252 billion or P191 million higher than the P9.061-billion goal and P1.019 billion more than year-ago level.

Customs missed its targets in August and September.

Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno said that the BIR's collection recovered in October from a huge shortfall in the previous month.

He said the P34-billion target last month was likely met although the final figures have yet to be released due to a 10-day lag in the consolidation of BIR data.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the government was carefully watching expenditures in October and that they should not exceed the P70-billion ceiling for the month.

"We have agreed with the budget department that we will exercise restraint in spending starting October," Camacho said.

The finance chief dismissed concerns that the government might miss the full-year deficit target of P202 billion following excessive spending in the third

CUSTOMS/B2

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PLDT income up 58% to ₱5.8B

By Abigail L. Ho

INDUSTRY giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. managed to post a net income of P5.8 billion in the first nine months of the year, up 58 percent from last year's P3.7 billion, despite the P5.3 billion in provision booked during the period.

Of the total provision, P4.8 billion was booked in the first half and another P500 million was set aside in the third quarter.

The first half provision covered more than P1.2 billion for PLDT's manpower reduction program and P3.5 billion for the write-down of its investments and assets in Unilink/Phil. Home Cable Holdings Inc. and satellite telecommunications service providers ACeS Phil. and ACeS International Ltd. It also covered the receivables from Philcom Corp.

The additional P500 million in provision covered pension-related expenses connected with the company's manpower reduction efforts on the fixed line side.

The company's consolidated revenue went up 21 percent to P70.4 billion in the nine-month period from P58.2 billion last year.

Cellular phone unit Smart Communications Inc. continued to fuel PLDT's strong performance. Smart's net income surged to P4.2 billion in the third quarter bringing its nine-month profit to P10.3 billion.

Smart remained the country's biggest cellular phone service provider with more than 12 million subscribers as of end-October, including the global system for mobile communications (GSM) subscribers of sister firm Pilipino Telephone Corp.'s Talk 'N Text brand.

The introduction of the lower denomination reloads via Smart Load also helped arrest the company's churn rate. From 3.4 percent in the first nine months of 2002, churn rate dropped to only 2.9 percent in the same period this year.

"Smart's overall performance is simply amazing. Smart continues to exceed expectations and is set to push back the so-called saturation point of cellular penetration rate in the country," PLDT president and chief executive Manuel Pangilinan said yesterday.

Free cash flow from Smart and PLDT's fixed line business also continued to increase, giving both firms more leeway in paring down their respective debts.

MVP seen ready to relinquish PLDT post

NOTHING lasts forever. This, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. president and chief executive Manuel Pangilinan knows and understands perfectly well.

He revealed in a briefing yesterday that he was about ready to relinquish his post as president and chief executive of the country's dominant carrier.

"There's always a time to go. There's always a time to move on. For me, personally, it's quite near. (But it's) not within the year," he said.

But Pangilinan, who has been at the helm of PLDT since November 1998, may not lose entirely his control of the company, even if he does move on and leave his post as president and chief executive.

Talks have it that he will replace Antonio "Tonyboy" Cojuangco as PLDT chair to allow the latter to focus more on his newly acquired television station, Associated Broadcasting Corp. (ABC-5).

Pangilinan neither confirmed nor denied this, saying it was up to the PLDT board to decide.

"Tonyboy has indicated his desire to retire as chair, subject to the transition plan that will be implemented in the next few months. At the end of the day, it's up to the board to decide," he said.

Cojuangco only told the PLDT board about his decision to step down as PLDT chair yesterday during a board meeting before the company's announcement of its nine-month financial results, Pangilinan said.

With Cojuangco no longer sitting as PLDT chair, he can be more focused on his job as president and chief executive of ABC-5. He will, however, stay on as a member of the PLDT board.

PANGILINAN

Pangilinan also revealed that the board of directors of PLDT's parent firm First Pacific Co. Ltd. wanted him to be in Hong Kong, the conglomerate's base of operations, more often.

While calling the shots at PLDT, he also sits as managing director, effectively chief executive, of the Hong Kong-based conglomerate.

Pangilinan has nominated Smart Communications Inc. president and chief executive Napoleon Nazareno to take his place at PLDT.

However, he said Nazareno should stay on as chief executive of the country's cellular phone giant.

Right now, no other name has cropped up in terms of a possible replacement for Pangilinan.

"He's the only one I see right now. The others may have other people in mind, but for me he's (right for the job)," he said.

The PLDT board is currently mapping out a "transition plan" that will allow a smooth top-level transition, possibly starting this January or February.

Abigail L. Ho

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Swiss company sells RP units

By Doris C. Dumlao

SWISS insurance giant Zurich Financial Services Group is selling its subsidiary in the Philippines to Standard Insurance Co. Inc. and Manufacturers Life Insurance Co. (Phils.) Inc. (Manulife) to focus on its core markets in Europe and North America.

In a statement yesterday, Zurich said it had signed an agreement to sell 100 percent of its non-life Philippine subsidiary Zurich General Insurance Philippines Inc. to Standard Insurance, a leading motorcar insurer in the country.

At the same time, it said that it had entered into a separate deal to sell the insurance portfolio of its subsidiary Zurich Life Philippines to Manulife.

The move, according to the company, is in line with its strategy to allocate capital to core markets in order to generate sustained profitable growth.

Based on a mutual cooperation agreement, Standard will, upon completion of the transaction, act as a cooperative partner of Zurich in serving the latter's corporate customers in the Philippines.

"For Standard, the acquisition is a perfect opportunity to fast track its expansion and obtain the expertise in the property insurance line," Standard said in a separate statement.

"Standard will integrate Zurich Gen and its personnel into its operations. This will fortify Standard's leadership position in the non-life industry given the complementation of the two companies," it noted.

The integration, Standard said, would allow it to continuously provide service of global standards and maintain an attractive motorcar and fire insurance portfolio catering to both retail and corporate markets.

Standard, which has been in the non-life insurance business for 45 years, claims control of the biggest market share in motorcar insurance estimated to exceed 15 percent of the total industry for 2003.

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Prof. Scott teaches at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business. He is the author and co-author of many scholarly books and articles, including, most recently, "Organization: Rational, Natural, and Open Systems" published by Prentice Hall (1998). In 1996, he received the Richard D. Irwin Award from the US Academy of Management for a career of scholarly contributions to management. He is in Manila to give the keynote address in the UA&P's 5th APEC Future Leaders' Forum with the theme, "Young Leaders For Culture Change: Promoting Excellence, Enterprise, and Sustainable Development."
For more details, please call Ms. Elsie Laguador at 634-2834 / 637-0912 to 26 local 341.

Exports recovered . . .

From page B1

ber. This sector is dominated by components and semiconductors, which gained by 3.1 percent to $1.57 billion from a year ago.

Another favorable indicator cited by Neri was the increasing volume of production of electrical machinery as reported in the NSO's monthly integrated survey of selected industries.

In the meantime, exports to the United States, the country's biggest trading partner, fell by 24.9 percent in September from year-ago, even as it still accounted for 19.2 percent of the country's export receipts.

The sluggish exports to the US, however, were offset by robust sales to Asian countries, particularly Japan, Hong Kong and mainland China.

Japan, the second biggest importer of Philippine products, accounted for 15 percent of total exports. Its imports from the Philippines increased by 12.2 percent from the level in the same month last year.

Hong Kong and mainland China emerged the third and fourth biggest export destinations, accounting for 9.5 percent and 8.5 percent of total receipts, respectively. Exports to Hong Kong rose by 20.4 percent while those to China surged by 71.8 percent.

Accounting for 88.2 percent of the total receipts, exports of manufactured goods picked up by 1.2 percent as sales amounted to $2.88 billion over the same period last year.

Customs Oct. . . .

From page B1

quarter.

Bernardo said that during the 10-month period, Customs' collection already reached P87.564 billion or P4.479 billion ahead of the P83.085-billion target and P9.747 billion higher than the previous year.

The agency must collect P100.56 billion this year and the BIR must deliver P424 billion for the government to meet its P202-billion deficit target.

Shares end up . . .

From page B1

carrier reported a 58-percent rise in net profit.

PLDT's American Depositary Receipts rose 4.7 percent Monday in New York.

"I think PLDT's earnings report was mainly responsible for lifting sentiment in the market," Citiseconline.com investment analyst Mark Alan Canizares told Dow Jones Newswires.

Canizares said PLDT's performance should also augur well for the country's overall economic performance.

"It's a good indicator of how the consumer sector is performing for the Philippines," he added, citing strong demand for cellular phone services.

Wall Street's advance on Monday and the favorable performance of Asian stock markets so far Tuesday also provided an additional boost to select Philippine shares, said Canizares. *AP*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of November 4, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	28,700
Bank of the Phil. Islands	46	46.5	46	46.5	653,800
China Banking Corp.	665	665	665	665	410
Citystate Savings Bank	15	15	15	15	2,100
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	36.5	36.5	36.5	36.5	99,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.7	0.7	260,000
First E-Bank Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	10,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	27	27.5	27	27	398,500
Philippine National Bank	25.5	26	25.5	26	19,400
Security Bank Corp.	18	18.5	18	18.5	3,200
Union Bank of the Phil.	29	29	29	29	800
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1630	1670	1630	1670	640
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	92,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1355	1375	1355	1375	6,490
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	28	28	27.5	27.5	9,700
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.77	0.77	0.75	0.75	8,810,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	810	840	810	840	51,330
ISM Communications Corp.	0.042	0.043	0.041	0.042	11,200,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.91	0.95	0.91	0.92	33,500,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	10,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	800	830	800	825	393,950
Ivantage Corp.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	10,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	55,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	13.75	14	13.75	13.75	96,900
Manila Electric Co. B	20.25	20.5	19.75	19.75	679,100
Petron Corp.	2.06	2.1	2.06	2.08	6,496,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	739,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	10,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	10,000
William,Gothong & Aboitiz	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	11,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	30,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	133,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	90,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.1	3.15	38,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30.5	31	30	31	49,900
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	360,200
San Miguel Corp. A	57	57	56.5	57	101,700
San Miguel Corp. B	62.5	63	62.5	63	276,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	160,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	40,000
Ayala Corp.	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.2	5,258,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.3	3.35	3.3	3.35	123,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.028	0.029	0.028	0.029	2,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	10,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	12,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.72	1.72	20,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.59	960,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	610,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.19	0.195	0.185	0.185	2,810,000
Aries Prime Res. Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	40,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.023	0.023	0.022	0.022	1,500,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	18	18	17.75	17.75	298,500
Global Equities Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	2,200,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	411,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	90,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.16	7,505,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	670,000
Music Corp.	0.4	0.42	0.4	0.41	3,780,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	150,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	100,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	70,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.095	0.095	0.0925	0.0925	700,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	60,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.44	1.44	22,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.92	1	0.92	1	40,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0675	0.0675	0.065	0.065	1,200,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	50,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.61	0.62	0.61	0.62	200,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	740,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	20,000
Manila Jockey Club	10	10	10	10	2,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	60,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	28	28	27.5	28	116,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	500
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,200
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.4	7,142,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	100,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.24	3,600,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	20,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	5,780,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.14	1.16	1.12	1.12	3,487,000
SM Development Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	3,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.4	7.4	7.4	7.4	9,062,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc A	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	10,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	1,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co A	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.23	4,860,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.34	0.35	0.33	0.33	5,540,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	10,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	31,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	5,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	210,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	1,140,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	31,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	10,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	24,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	10,000

DISCLOSURES

LEISURE and Resorts World Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Nov. 28, 2:30 p.m. at the Penthouse of BA Lepanto Building, Makati City.

***

PILIPINO Telephone Corp. disclosed the resignation of Augusto Macuja as chief operating officer of the company.

***

MANILA Electric Co. deferred the payment of its third quarter 2003 cash dividends on preferred shares due to lack of unrestricted retained earnings.

***

ELECTED directors of **Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.** were Gerardo Lanuza Jr., Juan Antonio Lanuza, Antonio Olbes, Walter Brown, Gerard Brimo, Annabelle Brown, Amador Bacani, Jose Ma. Francisco, Miguel Ortigas Jr., Ramon Cuervo III and Manuel Orros.

***

ISLAND Information and Technology Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Dec. 17, 2 p.m. at the Casino Español de Manila, T.M. Kalaw St., Malate.

***

MUSIC Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Dec. 17, 2 p.m. at Dasmarinas Room, Hotel Intercontinental Manila, Makati City.

***

ASIATRUST Development Bank will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Nov. 21, 2 p.m. at the Skytop, Hotel Intercontinental Hotel, Makati City. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

November 4, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.872371979	1.000000	55.455000
Japan	Yen	0.007859	0.009009	0.499600
United Kingdom	Pound	1.462706	1.676700	92.981400
Hongkong	Dollar	0.112325	0.128758	7.140300
Switzerland	Franc	0.641403	0.735240	40.772700
Canada	Dollar	0.652973	0.748503	41.508200
Singapore	Dollar	0.500185	0.573362	31.795800
Australia	Dollar	0.61099	0.700378	38.839500
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.314107	2.652661	147.103300
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.232633	0.266667	14.788000
Brunei	Dollar	0.498755	0.571723	31.704900
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000102	0.000117	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.021864	0.025063	1.389900
United Arab Emirates	Dirham	0.237536	0.272287	15.099700
European Monetary Union	Euro	1	1.146300	63.568100
ArgentinaPeso	0.30556	0.350263	19.423800	
Brazil	REAL	0.306418	0.351247	19.478400
Denmark	Kroner	0.134511	0.154190	8.550600
India	Rupee	0.019287	0.022109	1.226100
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.229602	0.263193	14.595400
Mexico	New Peso	0.079509	0.091141	5.054200
New Zealand	Dollar	0.532064	0.609905	33.822300
Norway	Kroner	0.121596	0.139386	7.729700
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015171	0.017391	0.964400
South Africa	Rand	0.126866	0.145427	8.064700
Korea	Won	0.000736	0.000844	0.046800
Sweden	Kroner	0.11041	0.126563	7.018600
Syria	Pound	0.020771	0.023810	1.320400
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025718	0.029481	1.634900
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000547	0.000627	0.034800

The wrong Chief Justice

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE attack dogs of the opposition are pouncing on the wrong Chief Justice in their switch-statistics game.

As early as December, the Commission on Audit had already informed the Danding boys in the House that from fiscal year 1985 to fiscal year 1999, "the accounting division (of the Supreme Court) did not prepare yearly financial reports indicating the income and disbursements of the (Judicial Development) Fund."

The COA supervising auditor assigned at the Supreme Court, Cecilia Caga-anan, even admitted to Rep. Marcelino Libanan, House justice committee chair, that the government auditors were in the dark as to the state of pre-2000 JDF finances because the "COA files are incomplete."

"Documents prior to CY (calendar year) 2000 were placed in boxes and stored in three places—the Records Management and Archives Office in Paco, Manila; the bodega near the Supreme Court basketball court; and the storeroom at the Office of the Presidential Electoral," Caga-anan reported to Libanan.

(Guess who was the Chief Justice before Hilario Davide?)

Libanan had written COA for the JDF documents at the behest of the appropriately nicknamed Rep. "Wimpy" Fuentebella, who had moved for an investigation of the JDF.

But even the production of the current documents to satisfy the House wimpies would be a sheer logistical nightmare, the COA official said.

"...(S)hould the Supreme Court be obliged to submit the documents, the Court would have to account for 90,936 monthly reports of collection and deposits, 72 reports of disbursements, 72 reports of checks issued, an undetermined number of disbursement vouchers and 1,263 sets of subsidiary ledgers corresponding to the total number of collecting officers (one set of subsidiary ledger consists of approximately 20 pages; thus, a total estimated number of 25,260 pages)," Caga-anan said.

The strange thing about this whole impeachment brouhaha is that, except for the reporting/classification lapses, the COA audit never red-flagged any accounting issue covering the Davide watch.

If Davide is guilty of any erroneous fund disbursement, it is his having overpaid by 129 percent the year 2000 allowances for the court employees. Yet do we see any court employee or any congressman denouncing the Chief Justice for this overpayment?

The Davide court is now being crucified for the renovation of the Baguio cottages, "P5 million curtain," and the acquisition of "luxury" cars. (Camry a luxury car? Toyota should be jumping with joy for the triumph of marketing hype.)

According to the COA audit, the very same report now in the hands of the pro-impeachment congressmen, the Davide court spent in three years about P230 million for infrastructure projects, building renovation and vehicles out of the P670 million allotted for the same period.

In other words, this the Danding boys omit in their political spin, Davide saved P440 million. For this the opposition wants the Chief Justice to be fed to the sharks?

Short takes

- JUST like in the 2001 meeting, even cellphones are banned in tomorrow's stockholders' meeting by the increasingly paranoid Baguio Country Club management.
- IN a departure from IPO roadshows, the management of the Transpacific Broadcast Group International met yesterday with Binondo businessmen, in addition to holding the usual round of marketing meetings with fund managers and stockbrokers.

Heard through the grapevine

THE family of the late businessman Roberto Villanueva (AG&P, Far East Bank) has lost the backyard of their sprawling South Forbes home to PBCom after the Villanuevas failed to pay a bank loan they took out all the way back in 1977.

The Villanuevas had subdivided their 6,272-square-meter property into three. PBCom recently auctioned the backyard, covering 1,983 sqm, with radio magnate Jose Luis "Bobet" Vera making the winning bid. *(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

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MAYBANK GROUP NET PROFIT UP 20%

Malaysia's Largest Banking Group Retains Leadership Position

MALAYAN Banking Bhd, Malaysia's largest banking group and parent bank of Maybank Philippines announced a 20% rise in net profit to US$526 million [Php28.2B] for the year ended June 30 from US$437 million [Php23.5B] previously.

Results were the best since June 30, 1997 when the Group posted a net profit of nearly US$789 million [Php42.4B] and came in better than market expectations.

Speaking to reporters in Kuala Lumpur recently, Maybank President and Chief Executive Officer Datuk Amirsham A. Aziz attributed the improved performance to better earnings from transactional banking activity and the reduction in loan loss provisions. Amirsham also acknowledged that this is reflective of the Group's ability to retain its leadership position amid challenging economic conditions and intense competition in the banking industry.

For the year just ended, the group's major business segments continued to be profitable, with overseas operations recording a significant turnaround. Its Singapore operations reported a pre-tax profit of US$25.34 million [Php1.4B] from a loss of US$26 million [Php1.4B] last year. Other overseas locations recorded a combined pre-tax profit of US$9.79 million [Php525.8M] from a loss of US$17.95 million [Php964M] previously.

Maybank is the bellwether of the financial sector in Malaysia and is the largest listed stock. About 25% of Malaysians are customers of Maybank, having more than 320 branches and assets of US$42.2 billion [Php2,266.4B], as at end-March and a market value of US$8.5 billion [Php456.5B]

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Maybank

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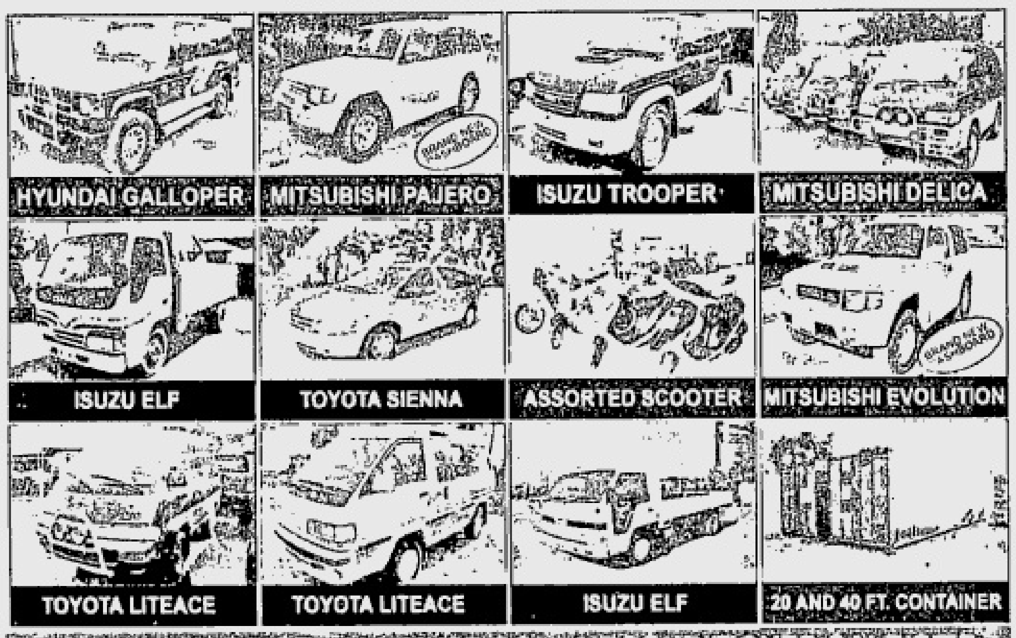

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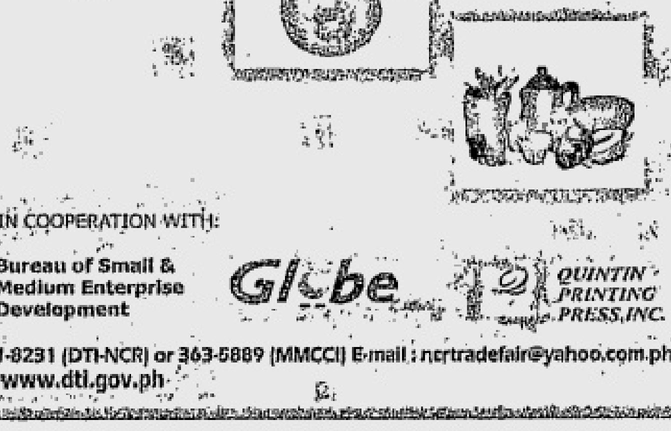

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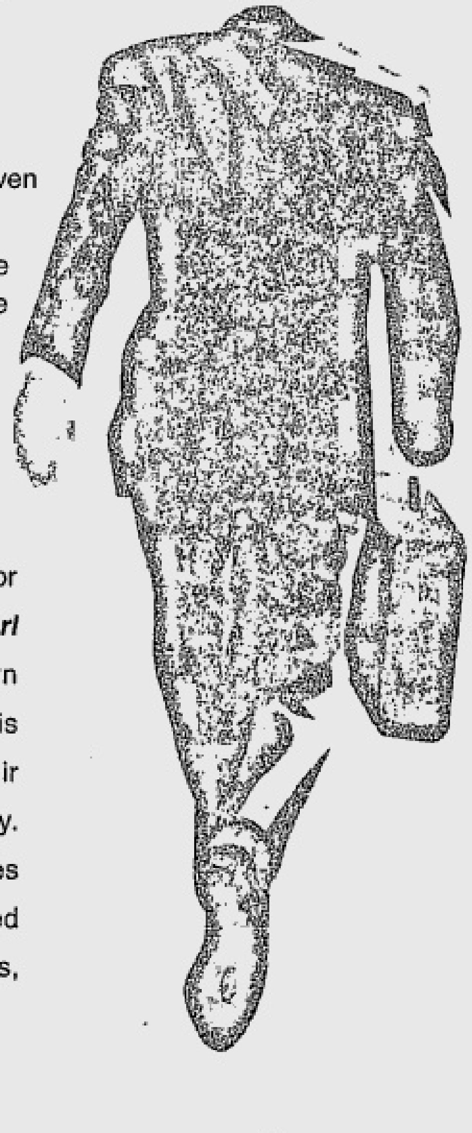

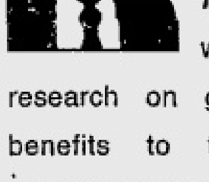

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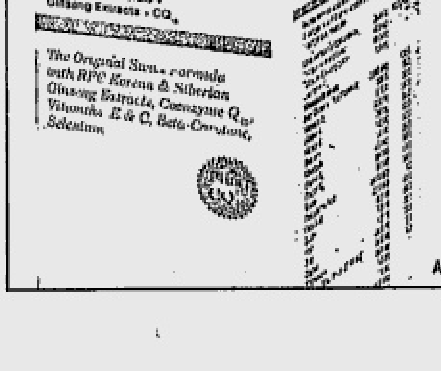
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THE TRUE STORY OF THE UPAA ELECTION

In the October 27, 2003 issue of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, certain UP alumni expressed their mistaken view that the conduct of the recent elections for the members of the Board of Directors of the UP Alumni Association (UPAA) for the 2003-2006 term was fraudulent. Their view was made on the basis of false representations made by candidates who lost the election and are not able to accept defeat gracefully. To set the record straight, this is the true story.

THE LIE. The UPAA election was attended with massive fraud and irregularities.

THE TRUTH. On May 29, 2003, the group of candidates led by **Mrs. Nelia Gonzalez (The Group of 21)**, assisted by Atty. Vicente Millora, filed with the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City a petition for prohibition and injunction and seeking the immediate issuance of a temporary restraining order, to stop thousands of UP alumni from getting ballots, - not given due course, hence, **Denied.** On June 6, 2003, they sought another temporary restraining order, to prevent the same UP alumni from casting their ballots, - not given due course, hence, **Denied.** On June 24, 2003, the same group, this time assisted by Atty. Marilyn Salamanca-Guzman, asked the court to immediately proclaim them winners in the election on the basis of the partial canvass-not given due course, **Denied.** On Oct 9,2003, Atty. Salamanca-Guzman for the same group sought another immediate temporary restraining order to stop canvassing and the eventual proclamation of the winners in the said canvass, the court refused to act on the same, hence, allowed the canvass and proclamation. Again they were **Denied.** Denied **four times** they asked the court for relief and **four times** they were repudiated by the court. Records show that they are now in court a **fifth** time to question the election once more. Having repeatedly lost in the judicial forum, they have also decided to take their problem to the media for trial by publicity.

THE LIE. The last day for the qualification of voters was on April 15, 2003 but the UPAA Comelec extended this period just to accommodate certain favored candidates.

THE TRUTH. The April 15, 2003 deadline was never extended by the Comelec. Only UP alumni who met the qualifications for voters on or before April 15, 2003 were allowed to cast ballots in the election. Even the members of the UP Class of 2002 who voted in the polls had to meet the April 15, 2003 deadline.

THE LIE. Under the UPAA rules, the canvass was to begin on May 30, 2003 but the UPAA Comelec conducted the canvass only on June 16 to 18, 2003 just to accommodate certain favored candidates.

THE TRUTH. The UPAA Comelec did not reset the canvassing unilaterally. During the first hearing in the court case filed by The Group of 21 of Nelia Gonzales, held on May 30, 2003, the parties and their lawyers agreed in the presence of the judge to reset the canvass to June 16, 2003.

THE LIE. At the canvass held on June 16-18, 2003, The Group of 21 of Nelia Gonzales, won by an overwhelming margin and yet the UPAA Comelec refused to proclaim them winners.

THE TRUTH. The canvass held on June 16 to 18, 2003 was not a complete and final canvass precisely because there was a pending court case where the participation of thousands of voters was being questioned. Proclamation of winners is legally impossible without completing the entire canvass.

THE LIE. The UPAA Comelec allowed ballots to be cast even after the June 16-18, 2003 canvass just to accommodate certain favored candidates.

THE TRUTH. The June 16-18, 2003 canvass was not a complete and final canvass because of the pending court case. When the case was eventually dismissed by the court, the Comelec allowed the UP alumni subject of the court suit to vote in the election. These UP alumni met the requirements for voting on or before the April 15, 2003 deadline. The group of 21 of Mrs. Gonzalez never mentioned the dismissal of the court case in their newspaper advertisement.

THE LIE. The UPAA Comelec issued ballots to several UP alumni even if they failed to meet all pertinent requirements for voting.

THE TRUTH. Certain voters affiliated with both parties were earlier disqualified by the Comelec for their failure to meet the requirements for voting on or before the April 15, 2003 deadline. Both contending parties asked the Comelec for reconsideration. In the interest of wider suffrage, the Comelec reconsidered its decision and allowed all the said voters to participate in the polls.

THE LIE. The UPAA Comelec orchestrated the illegal participation of the members of the UP Class of 2002 in the election to favor certain candidates.

THE TRUTH. As early as January 2003, the members of the UP Class of 2002 were sent their ballots by mail. When the Comelec, however, discovered that the members of the said class had not paid their membership dues on or before the April 15, 2003, the Comelec disqualified them. The Group of 21 of Nelia Gonzales protested this and asked the Comelec to reconsider its decision. Again, in the interest of wider suffrage, the Comelec reconsidered its decision and allowed all members of the said class to vote, provided, however, that they had been issued their ballots on or before the April 15, 2003 deadline. Absolutely no ballots were issued to any of them after April 15, 2003.

THE LIE. The continuation of the canvass on October 10 and 11, 2003 was in violation of the election rules and the same was kept a secret from The Group of 21.

THE TRUTH. The continuation of the canvass held on October 10 and 11, 2003 was a matter of public knowledge since advertisements to this effect were published in at least 3 newspapers of general circulation. Contrary to what they say, The Group of 21 of Nelia Gonzales was duly informed about the continuation of the canvass. In fact, days before October 10, 2003, the Group 0f 21 of Nelia Gonzales went to court to enjoin the continuation of the canvass!

THE LIE. The UPAA Comelec unilaterally changed the election rules every so often to suit certain favored candidates.

THE TRUTH. The rules of the election were never changed by the Comelec at any stage of the entire electoral exercise. All resolutions issued by the Comelec were in full accord with the said rules and, in a suppletory manner, with the provisions of the Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines, as well as current jurisprudence on Election Law. The Group of 21 has yet to specify and prove its charges in this regard.

THE LIE. The UPAA Comelec allowed ballot box stuffing in favor of certain candidates.

THE TRUTH. The ballot boxes used in the election are transparent. Three locks are fastened to it - one from the Comelec, one from The Group of 21 and one from The Group of 23. These boxes were always in the custody of the UPAA secretariat during office hours and any UP alumnus may go check it out anytime during the said hours. Ang Bahay ng Alumni security guards always keep a watchful eye at the UPAA secretariat after office hours. If it really distrusted the UPAA Comelec in this regard, The Group of 21 should have posted their own 24-hour guard.

THE LIE. The election was rigged by people identified with the Upsilon Sigma Phi so that its members will be able to perpetuate themselves in power in the UPAA.

THE TRUTH. ***The newly proclaimed UPAA President is NOT an UPSILONIAN.*** Members of the Upsilon Sigma Phi and its counterpart sorority, the Sigma Delta Phi ran in both parties. In addition, Atty. Domingo Santiago, Jr., the Upsilonian who led The Group of 23, withdrew his candidacy for the Law category even before the proclamation of winners. This led to the automatic victory of the opposing candidate from the party of Mrs. Nelia Gonzalez under that category. If the Upsilon had wanted to perpetuate itself in the UPAA, Atty. Santiago ought to have just resigned from the UPAA Board after his proclamation. This way, the UPAA Board could have installed another Upsillonian to replace him. For the record, Mrs. Gonzalez and one of her candidates won in the election and have been proclaimed by the Comelec.

THE FACTS, PLEASE, NOT FICTION. The Group of 21 of Nelia Gonzales refuses to distinguish fact from fiction, particularly the fact that they lost the elections. They have been overly generous in their allegations that the UPAA Comelec has been grossly partial and unfair, and yet it has been very miserly in mentioning the many instances when the same Comelec ruled in their favor. They conveniently failed to mention that the Comelec dismissed the petition to disqualify their standard-bearer, Mrs. Nelia Gonzalez, for being over-aged; that the Comelec granted their petition that transparent ballot boxes be used in the elections; that the Comelec granted at least 3 of their motions for reconsideration, and that the Comelec denied the motion of The Group of 23 to postpone the partial canvass set for June 16, 2003. At the very least, The Group of 21 of Nelia Gonzales has not been very honest in its assessment of the election. Then again, in most, if not all elections in the Philippines, the losing candidates always claim they were victims of election fraud. What remains a mystery is that Mrs. Gonzalez is contesting the very election where she won.

A CALL. The UPAA, therefore, calls on all UP alumni, particularly those who were hoodwinked into signing the October 27, 2003 paid advertisement without checking out the facts for themselves, to ignore all attempts on the part of the losers of the election to ruin the credibility of the polls if only to protect their personal interests. The election was clean and above-board and the record will confirm this. As to the losing candidates of **The Group of 21 led by Nelia Gonzales**, you are all called upon to accept defeat gracefully. It is the noble and honorable thing to do under the premises.

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ADVT.

Giant steel firm submits ₱7-B bid to reopen NSC

By Michelle V. Remo

LNM Holdings N.V., the world's second largest steel manufacturer, has offered a P7-billion bid to rehabilitate and eventually reopen the country's mothballed National Steel Corp.

Sources at the Department of Trade and Industry said LNM was willing to pay P2.9 billion up front, out of the P7-billion bid.

LNM general manager for marketing Eric Tiere earlier said the company was committed to operate NSC for the long-term.

It likewise intended to infuse enough capital to operate NSC at full capacity within two years should it bag the contract.

LNM has also expressed its intention to buy the steel firm after the three-year lease contract expires.

Tiere stressed that the company was in a strong financial condition to operate NSC.

"We feel that our track record of turning around steel plants will make us the ideal candidate for National Steel," he was earlier quoted as saying.

LNM has steel-making facilities in 12 countries and expects its revenue to exceed $12 billion this year.

A government task force and the Department of Trade and Industry have been working with NSC's management committee-- composed of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the the steel firm's creditor banks- to find ways to rehabilitation NSC and put it back on its feet.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel Roxas II said in a briefing with reporters the government was already studying the submitted bids, one of which was from LNM.

"The DTI will continue to play the constructive role of bringing the parties together, and we will do all that we can to ensure a successful outcome of negotiations," he said.

Roxas added that there were about three or four original bidders for the contract to reopen NSC, but that only two firms were left in the shortlist.

The Philippine National Bank represents NSC's creditor banks in the negotiations.

The NSC plant in Iligan City was closed in November 1999 due to its failure to service its debts amounting to about P18 billion.

Aside from PNB, NSC's creditors include Credit Agricole Indosuez, Land Bank of the Philippines, China Banking Corp., Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Equitable PCI Bank, United Coconut Planters Bank, Export & Industry Bank and Wise Capital Investment & Trust Co.

Mirant acquires 20% stake in Subic power distributor

By Ronnel W. Domingo

MIRANT Philippines, the country's largest independent power producer, has acquired a 20 percent stake in the power utility serving the Subic Freeport Zone.

Mirant signed the shareholders agreement with the Aboitiz group last Monday.

Juan Antonio Bernad, Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc. (AEV) senior vice president, said in a report to the Philippine Stock Exchange that Mirant was now one of six shareholders of Subic EnerZone Corp.

Bernad said that under the distribution management service agreement with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, equity for the new distributor would be around P100 million.

Subic EnerZone's shareholders include: AEV, 20 percent; Davao Light & Power Corp. (DLPC), 40 percent; San Fernando Electric Light and Power Co. (Sfelapco), 10 percent; and Pampanga Sugar Development Co. and Okeelanta Corp., each with 5 percent.

DLPC and Sfelapco, which are also power distributors, are subsidiaries of Aboitiz Power Corp.—AEV's holding company for its energy businesses.

In a telephone interview, Mirant Philipines vice president Allan Paul Flake said the investment showed its confidence in the potential of the freeport zone as a focus of economic growth.

"Mirant thinks that this investment would help in the development of infrastructure that would attract more investors (to locate in Subic)," Flake added.

The official said that Mirant had been supplying half of Subic's electricity needs even before the new venture.

"Subic had represented demand that would take in the Sual coal-fired plant's 218 megawatts in (uncontracted) capacity," Flake said.

Of the 1,218-megawatt generating capacity of the Sual power plant in Pangasinan, 1,000 MW is under contract with the National Power Corp.

Last month, the Energy Regulatory Commission granted Subic EnerZone a provisional authority to implement rates that are 40 centavos per kilowatt-hour lower than the existing P1 per kWh.

Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito Payumo said in a recent statement that the Subic freeport welcomed the new venture because Subic investors, residents and other consumers would now enjoy lower consumption rates.

Payumo added that electricity service would be improved as part of the contract to rehabilitate the deteriorating distribution facilities in the former military base.

The SBMA issued the required notice to proceed (NTP) to the consortium on Oct. 25.

"Subic freeport now serves as a model in power privatization program as it is being emulated by other government owned and controlled economic zones," Payumo said. *with a report from Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

DBP allots ₱5B for SME loans

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEVELOPMENT Bank of the Philippines has set aside some P5 billion of its funds for lending to small and medium enterprises.

The loan program would fall under DBP's factoring services, a credit window for SMEs that only have receivables for collateral.

SMEs that have aging receivables of between 60 and 90 days are qualified to enroll in the loan program.

"The DBP in turn could advance the amount they need to pay the salaries of employees or other expenditures related to their business," explained Wilfredo L. Teodoro, DBP's first vice president for development banking.

SMEs with contract arrangements with large manufacturing companies such as San Miguel Corp. have already availed themselves of DBP's factoring services program.

"This program would be beneficial to firms that have credit terms with their contractors. SMC, in particular, has enrolled its 150 SMEs to the factoring services program this year," Teodoro said.

The DBP suspended the loan program at the height of the Asian financial crisis, relaunching it only this year.

The government financial institution has P44.53 billion in funds to support development projects through its wholesale and retail lending operations.

It lends out to both large firms and SMEs but the DBP strengthens its links with SMEs to maximize the bank's contribution to national productivity and poverty reduction.

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Mondragon in buy-out talks with foreign firm

By Michelle V. Remo

MONDRAGON International Philippines Inc. is talking to a foreign "white knight," who will either invest in Mondragon or buy out the debt-ridden firm.

Mondragon has financial problems stemming from its failure to pay rental fees of P325 million with the Clark Development Corp. for the management of the Mimosa Leisure Estate in Clark Field, Pampanga. As a result, CDC took over the Mimosa Estate's operations in December 1998.

This development was announced by MIPI chair and chief executive officer Jose Antonio Gonzales to reporters yesterday at the sidelines of the 2nd International CEO Forum organized by the Management Association of The Philippines.

Gonzales said he was hoping the company would be able to forge a formal agreement with the foreign firm soon and settle its obligations with the government.

Mipi was earlier talking to a number of possible investors, but the company said most prospective investors were still waiting for political uncertainties in the country to wane before agreeing to ink a deal with Mipi.

Mipi is in the process of restructuring its debts worth P7 billion. It is the parent firm of Mondragon Leisure and Resorts Corp. (MLRC), which operated the Mimosa estate.

Gonzales said MIPI is willing to enter into conciliatory talks with the government to thresh out its debt problem with the CDC. He added that MIPI is agreeable to the proposal of tapping a third party who will mediate between Mipi and the government.

In the absence of any investor MIPI earlier cancelled a memorandum of understanding it signed with CDC which contained provisions on the possible settlement of the debt obligations of Mipi.

The MOU would have given MLRC the chance to recover management and control of Mimosa provided it complied with the requirements set by the CDC.

If the company fails to come up with a concrete settlement agreement with CDC, the latter said it would be forced to lease Mimosa to new corporate vehicle that will take charge of its operation.

Abojeb, Indon firm ink deal

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Aboitiz Jebsens Bulk Transport Corp. (Abojeb) and Indonesia's publicly listed Humpuss Intermoda Transportasi Tbk PT (HITS) signed a joint venture for a cargo shipment service between Glan in Sarangani province in Mindanao and Bitung in Indonesia.

Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza said the deal was signed during the Mindanao Business Conference (Minbizcon) held here on Oct. 30.

Signing in behalf of Abojeb was Norissa Ridgewell, vice president for lines division, while Budhi Halim, HITS president, signed the agreement in behalf of his company.

The MOA did not specify how much each company would be pouring in for the joint venture but the service would start in February next year.

Dureza said the cargo service deal tackled in several discussions between the proponents under the East Asean Growth Area polygon. Eaga groups Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Dureza, also chair of the Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDCo), said the joint venture would definitely boost trading between Eaga member countries.

"This such linkage could boost trading especially among small traders because they would now be spending less to bring their products outside the country," he said.

Dureza said small traders could also consolidate the shipment of their products and send these as bulk shipment to the port of destination.

He said it would also help in the country's bid to become major producer halal products.

"We bring our products via the shortest route which is Brunei. Brunei eventually would market these products to the Middle East," Dureza said. *Grace C. Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

TO THE CONCERNED STOCKHOLDERS OF BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB

I am constrained to put out this ad to respond to the many calls I am receiving in regard to the proposed annual stockholders meeting to be held this month.

In brief, despite representation in the proxy statement that there are no corporate matters or actions to be taken up that may give rise to the exercise by a stockholder of the right of appraisal, the meeting as per agenda INCLUDES THE CONVERSION OF BCC FROM A STOCK CORPORATION TO A NON-STOCK CORPORATION.

DOES THIS NOT GIVE RISE TO THE RIGHT OF APPRAISAL OF ANY STOCKHOLDER?

This and many other acts of the "incumbent" board and management bother me.

First, in the 2001 annual stockholders meeting, they physically barred stockholders perceived to be against them from entering the premises of the club. Those who were already within the premises, and these included decent and prominent people, were not allowed to speak.

As a result, because those who wanted to attend or who were not listened to were effectively disenfranchised. Surely they could have been allowed in and it would not have made any difference to the "incumbents."

The "incumbents" also amended the By-Laws so that annual stockholder meetings would be held once every two years instead of yearly as mandated by law.

In brief, there is a total lack of transparency in their actions not to speak of good governance.

AND, BY THE WAY, I WAS ARBITRARILY SUSPENDED AND I CONTINUE TO RECEIVE MONTHLY DUE BILLINGS WHICH I RELIGIOUSLY PAY!

You are certainly aware from newspaper reports that the "incumbents" have even filed cases against the Securities and Exchange Commission in a desperate attempt to prevent the opening up of their corporate records.

To get back now to the issue at hand, the "incumbents" claim that conversion to a non-stock corporation will:

1. cut and save on cost and likewise to seek tax exemption;

2. not impair nor diminish your proprietary rights as stockholders and that you can still transfer your membership;

3. make the BCC at par with other progressive country clubs.

There is a deeper agenda here. I ask you to reflect on this. Please consider:

1. Cutting and saving costs are not dependent on the conversion of BCC to a non-stock corporation;

2. Once converted, present stockholders will no longer be stockholders who can transfer ownership rights but shall become mere members. Not only that, as a stockholder we own part of the land, NO MATTER HOW INFINITESIMALLY SMALL OUR RESPECTIVE HOLDINGS - BUT WE OWN IT! THIS WILL BE REMOVED FROM US!.

3. Other clubs may be non-stock corporations but their Articles or By-Laws specifically protect members' rights including the right to transfer ownership interest.

4. And, you may wish to ponder over this - a non-stock corporation wil keep the "incumbents" there in perpetuity. This is the agenda!

If we do not join hands, present stockholders will be denied the right of representation because there are certain provisions in their proposal that encompass the following:

1. Rule making authority rests solely on the "incumbents".
2. The power of the stockholders to amend the By-Laws is delegated to the "incumbent board of directors".
3. Our right to vote will be dependent on the sole discretion of the "Board of Directors".

I also call on both Ilusorio factions to keep BCC away from their intra-family conflict for good governance to prevail.

Allow me now to state that I do not have any personal agenda except the good of the club and the rights of the stockholders whoever they may be. I am independent of any factions.

If you believe and agree with me that the above matters are of serious concern to stockholders whose only interest is the club, I invite you to a dialogue:

WHEN : Wednesday, November 5, 2003 at 3:00 p.m.
WHERE : Magallanes Room, Makati Sports Club

Protect your investment and your rights!

For peace in the Baguio Country Club.

CARLOS A. PEDROSA
Member No. 3724

ADVT.

Dying of thirst in the middle of a lake

By Ricardo P. Guevara

COMMENTARY

IT WOULD seem paradoxical to die of thirst in the middle of the lake, as the more likely cause of fatality under such a situation would be drowning. But the pioneers of industrialization in Mindanao just feel the opposite with the experience they and the others who followed them have had.

Before World War II, the family of the late Judge Guillermo Guevara had established a highly profitable rubber shoe and rubber products factory in Pasay, then a town in the Rizal Province. The plant was completely destroyed during the war and after the war, instead of rebuilding, the Guevaras relented to new opportunities.

Land of Promise

They have been appraised of the government's hydroelectric project being pursued in Mindanao, then tauted as the "Land of Promise." It was obvious that one of the underlying objectives of that project was the industrialization of Mindanao, for along with it, the government also established power-intensive industrial projects such as the iron/steel smelting and ammonium sulfate fertilizer plants. The government had also undertaken an extensive and intensive campaign to woo entrepreneurs to put up businesses in Mindanao with the hydroelectric project as the main come-on.

In response to the government's call and to avail themselves of cheap electricity, the Guevaras put up a calcium carbide plant in Mindanao. It was the first private corporation to avail itself of the power from the hydro project below the Maria Cristina Falls. Due to its proximity to the falls, the Guevaras named their corporation Maria Cristina Chemical Industries Inc., now MCCI Corp. The company spawned many small and medium-scale businesses, including charcoal manufacturing in Dinagat which was MCCI's source of charcoal to provide the carbon, the principal element in carbide processing. Another is limestone quarrying, another raw material in carbide making. This employed hundreds in the foothills of Iligan where the limestone deposits were found. MCCI also took over from the government the coal mines at Malangas, Zamboanga. It later expanded its product line to include ferro alloys and in the process, spawned a new company, the Mindanao Ferroalloys Corp., a joint venture with the largest steel company in the world, Pohang Iron and Steel Corp. of Korea, among others. This necessitated the establishment of a silica mining operation at Ayungon, Negros. MCCI also indued the establishment of the PVC and chlor-alkali plant of Mabuhay Vinyl Corp. that was initially acetylene-based and drew its supply from MCCI. It also spawned the creation of the Mindanao Agro-Forestry Co., which undertook industrial planting of giant Ipil-Ipil as raw material for charcoal.

The above demonstrate the extent of the multiplier effect that low-cost power can produce from just one pioneering company.

Industrialization

The pioneering enterprise that the family of Judge Guillermo Guevara put up in Iligan City started the influx of industries to Iligan and neighboring towns as far out as Cagayan de Oro and even beyond. All these being attracted by the low cost of electricity from the Maria Cristina Hydro Electric plant. The two plants set up by the government to be the initial bulk consumers of the plant were later privatized, the fertilizer plant was acquired by the Marcelo family and the iron and steel plant acquired by the Jacinto group, to become IISMI (now National Steel). A pulp and paper plant was set up by the Rustan group and the Aboitiz family put up a flour mill while two large cement plants were built, all in Iligan. In the neighboring town of Manticao, two ferroalloy plants were set up, as well as another giant cement plant in Lugait. In the Phividec area in Cagayan de Oro, the ferrochrome plant of Ferrochrome Philippines and the iron sintering plant of Philippine Sinter were set up.

In all of these projects, foreign equity had been infused by the largest and most well known in their respective lines of business, including Kawasaki Steel, Voest Alpine, Union Carbide, Mitsubishi Corp., Pohang Iron and Steel, Ssangyong Corp. and International Finance Corp.

Employment

At their full operations, these companies directly employed tens of thousands and provided indirect but full-time employment to miners and those involved in extracting and supplying mineral ores to the ferroalloy plants.

Many of these firms, being export-oriented, generated millions in foreign exchange and in the process, provided business to trucking companies, shipping lines, forwarders and those involved in the movement of raw materials and finished products.

In the operation of their business and providing direct and indirect employment, these companies generated taxes for the national and local governments in the form of income taxes, business taxes and other levies. Being power intensive, they were very efficient users of electricity having very high load factors, in some cases as high as 95 percent. They also provided prompt and regular cash inflows to Napocor's Mindanao grid, in contrast with other sectors that, besides being subsidized, had built up receivable accounts amounting to billions of pesos that the government had to condone through a specific provision of Epira.

Nightmare

Up to that stage, the development of Northern Mindanao, as a result of abundant and cheap electricity generated by the hydroelectric plants of the Agus Grid, was truly a fulfillment of the dream of the leaders who conceived, planned and implemented the construction of the hydroelectric grid. Sad to say, however, that dream has turned into a nightmare, as many of plants that had gravitated to Mindanao lost their viability due to the continuous increases in industrial power rates and had shutdown.

The very reason they established in Mindanao had become

DYING/B7

Total helps jeepney drivers raise their income

By Michelle V. Remo

CORPORATE CITIZEN

JEEPNEY drivers are the biggest customers of TotalFinaElf Philippines Corp. so the local subsidiary of French petroleum distribution giant Total thought that the least it could do is to help them find more ways to earn a living.

It was out of this desire that Total came up with its "Kooperatibong Tulong-tulong sa Pagsulong" project, under which jeepney cooperatives are given one fuel storage station to operate.

Total provides the fuel storage stations with petroleum products at wholesale prices. The cooperative then turns around and sells the products at slightly higher retail prices, with the income going back to the cooperative to increase its pool of funds.

Much-needed capital

The increased funds allow the members to borrow much-needed capital for other business ventures aside from driving a jeepney.

Total corporate affairs manager Rona Quejada said Total initially thought of coming up with a regular credit program for the jeepney drivers when it entered the petroleum distribution business in 1999.

But since the direct scheme could present problems, Total decided to take the cooperative route.

Total teamed up with the Office of Transport Cooperatives under the Department of Transportation and Communication and got a list of jeepney cooperatives that could become beneficiaries of the "Kooperatibong Tulong-tulong sa Pagsulong" project.

The Office of Transport Cooperatives evaluates the jeepney cooperatives and decides on which ones are strong enough or organized enough to handle the operations of a fuel storage station.

Beneficiaries

The identified beneficiaries were then given their own fuel stations. Total likewise provided the members with training on how to manage the stations to ensure the long-term viability of the business.

"The beauty of this project is that the drivers have a stake in the business, and therefore they will work hard and take care of it," Quejada said.

The project currently serves four jeepney transport cooperatives.

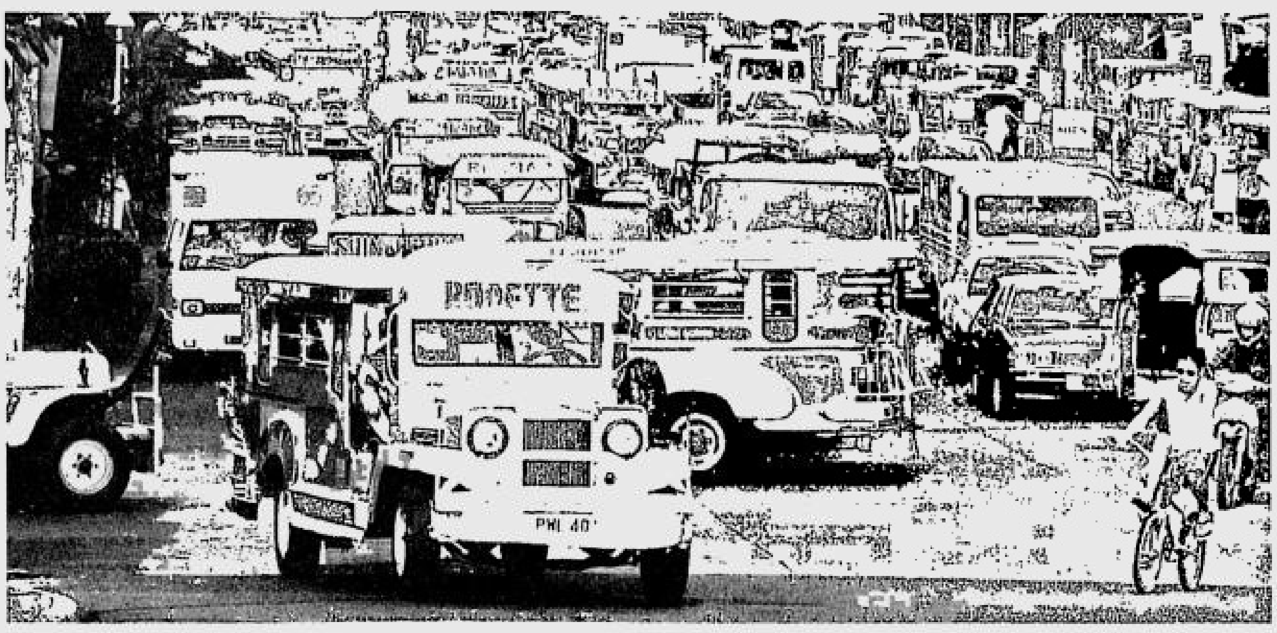
These include the GMA Transport Service Cooperative, which has 261 members who service the Alabang and GMA-to-Cavite route; Francisco Homes Transport Service Cooperative, 150 members, San Jose del Monte, Bulacan-to-Cubao route; Basicano Tansport Cooperative, 200 members, Bagong Silang, Quezon City and Camarin, Caloocan-to-Philcoa and Novaliches routes and Concepcion Capas Transport Cooperative, 150 members, Concepcion-Capas, Tarlac route.

She said Total, a French-based multinational company that belongs to the elite group of Fortune 500 companies, stuck to the cooperative project since 1999 because it believes that the most effective corporate responsibility projects are those that empower people, giving them opportunities to earn a better living and become independent.

She said a jeepney cooperative could apply to become a beneficiary of the project by submitting an application to the Office of Transport Cooperative.

Quejada said Total has decided to make the project a permanent part of the company's corporate responsibility programs because of the huge impact it creates and the families that Total is able to reach out to.

"With the hundreds of cooperative members, we get to help hundreds of families. This project is something we want and we know we can sustain because fuel is our business," said Quejada.



TOTALFINAELF Philippines' "Kooperatibong Tulong-tulong sa Pagsulong" project aims to help jeepney cooperatives increase their funds to finance the members' livelihood programs.

Internet firm readies IPO

By Elena R. Torrijos

TRANSPACIFIC Broadcast Group International Inc. has been contracted to connect 67 more schools to the Internet via satellite by the end of next year.

The company made the disclosure as it kicked off presentations yesterday to investors in preparation for its initial public offering.

Transpacific chair Arsenio Ng said in a statement that the number of schools connected by the company had risen to 53 from 28 last April, when its IPO application was filed.

TBGI is offering to the public 37 percent of its common stock or 76.6 million common shares at between P1.18 and P1.48 per share to raise around P90.4 million to P113.4 million.

The offering period is set for Nov. 17 to 28 and listing date is set for Dec. 12.

TBGI, which provides digital satellite network infrastructure for data and video services, plans to use proceeds of the IPO to accelerate the cross-linking of 450 schools in strategic municipalities.

Dying of thirst . . .

From page B6

the cause of their undoing—power rates. Seven ferroalloy plants have been still for a long time, along with them were the mining companies that supplied the mineral ores and other service units appurtenant to the operations. Thousands of directly employed and tens of thousands that were indirectly employed were dislocated and might have become a factor in the peace and order situation in the island once called The Land of Promise." Those investors and entrepreneurs that established in Mindanao are finding out, if they have not found out yet, that it has become 'The Land of Broken Promise.'

They established their industries in Mindanao to avail themselves of the abundant and cheaper electricity generated by the hydroelectric power plants along the Agus River. Since the Agus River draws its water from Lake Lanao, the demise of the industries built on the premise of low-cost power from that source lends truism to the paradox of dying of thirst in the middle of the lake.

To add insult to injury, those that "died of thirst" went through the ignominy of bank foreclosures, formal insolvency and bankruptcy proceedings and the pain of failure.

(The author is the chair of the Association of Mindanao Industries)

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Foreign funds put in $1.5B in India

BOMBAY—Foreign funds added $1.5 billion worth of Indian shares to their holdings in October, their highest net investment in a single month since the country allowed foreign portfolio investment a decade ago.

That takes their net purchases in 2003 to $4.6 billion, more than six times the total for the whole of last year, data released by capital market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India on Tuesday showed.

"In the long-run, we are still bullish on Indian markets," said Singapore-based V. Anantha Nageswaran, director, global economics and asset allocation, at Credit Suisse.

"But in the near term, the market seems to have run ahead." The massive inflow, coming on expectations of strong growth in Asia's third largest economy, stoked a six-month rally, in which the key Bombay share index rose 73 percent from the year's low struck in late April.

The index is up some 50 percent in 2003, while the the Bombay Stock Exchange's market capitalisation up some $78 billion.

The marker trades at 15 times forecast earnings, comparable to regional peers, although inflows into those markets have been far bigger.

Data from Nomura International Hong Kong showed foreign funds poured about $16 billion into Taiwan stocks and $9.3 billion into Korea this year till Nov. 2.

But analysts said the money flow into India would continue as traders are betting on upgrades to earnings outlooks after the past quarter's profits beat street estimates in the season that ended on Friday.

"Valuations do not look stretched," said R. Sukumar, chief investment officer at Franklin Templeton Investments. "The rally looks set to continue for some more time." India's central bank further fuelled optimism over earnings upgrades when it raised its economic growth forecast to 6.5-7.0 percent for the fiscal year to March, with an upward bias, from 6 percent, at its mid-term review of monetary policy on Monday. *Reuters*

Philippines fears wash out of wheat deals from China

SINGAPORE—Philippine buyers of Chinese wheat are fearing that a few contracts may have to be either cancelled or washed out as the world's biggest consumer of the grain struggles with high domestic prices and eroding stocks.

With fears mounting that China may be reducing export offers for 2004—a prospect that is keeping the grains trade on tenterhooks—Philippine traders said some shipments scheduled for December and January might have to bear the brunt.

"It's currently being negotiated what's going to happen to two feed wheat contracts of 25,000 tonnes each," said one Manila-based trader. "I can't say now whether it's going to be a washout or a cancellation." A washout is the sale of a cargo back to the supplier at a higher price.

Grain traders dealing with Chinese wheat have said that China had stopped making fresh export offers for both feed and milling wheat. Trade officials say China's grain reserves may be fast dropping after five years of crop shortfalls.

Talk has recently circulated in Chicago grain markets that China may be importing large amounts of wheat to replenish grain stocks, although Asian grain traders say the import volumes were likely to remain low.

"With Chinese wheat not available so easily, we have no option but look at alternative supply sources," said Ric Pinca, vice-president of the Philippine Association of Feedmillers.

Limited Availability

Regional grain traders said the latest Chinese feed wheat offers were only for November although volumes were small.

Offer prices were close to $150 a ton C&F.

"There is some chance that one might get Chinese feed wheat for immediate shipment but I am not sure if you can get after that. Philippine buyers are concerned since Chinese feed wheat was the feed wheat of choice," said another Manila trader.

The Philippines has been the second-largest buyer of Chinese wheat this year, after South Korea, taking 284,813 tons of the grain in the January-September period, more than nine times as much as a year earlier, Chinese customs data shows.

The interest in Chinese feed wheat has risen since India this year stopped offering its lustre-loss grade of wheat, which many Asian importers used to buy for feed use.

In addition to that, supplies from Eastern Europe, which made inroads to Asia last year, had completely dried up. The cheapest Indian wheat was currently quoted at about $165 a tonC&F.

"The feed wheat situation in the regional looks a bit tight," said one Singapore trader. "Many people have covered for nearby needs and that's a good thing. But if Australia sells aggressively, I would think that might help prices to ease." Australia is expected to harvest a near record wheat crop of about 24 million tons in the 2003/04 crop season after drought devastated the previous year's crop, driving it down to 9.4 million tons. *Reuters*

AN INDIAN Kashmiri youth holds up a bunch of crocus flowers used in the production of saffron in a field in Chandihara some 16 kilometers south of Srinagar. With saffron from Iran making its way into Indian markets, producers of the world's most precious spice in troubled Indian-administered Kashmir are worried about their future.

AFP

IT firms' merger to boost base in RP

NEW DELHI—US consultancy firm Headstrong Corp and fellow American IT firm Techspan announced their merger here on Monday, saying the move would strengthen their offshore bases in India and the Philippines.

The new company, with 900 employees and combined revenues of $100 million, will hire another 1,000 people over the next year, officials said.

Many of the employees are based at Techspan's offshore bases in the Indian cities of Bangalore and New Delhi and Headstrong's center in the Philippine capital Manila.

"This merger defines the new global consulting model by combining multi-shore domain experience with a strong heritage in consulting and IT services," said Headstrong CEO Kevin Dougherty.

He said the merger would help clients mitigate risks as the new company had offshore bases in both India and the Philippines "focussed on delivering client-specific solutions." Techspan CEO Arjun Malhotra, who will take over as the chair of the new company, said more acquisitions were possible.

"We are also going to look at the acquisition of new companies to expand the range of IT skills we offer, said Malhotra.

The two companies will together operate in eight countries with a majority of their offices located in the United States. *AFP*

Cadbury to use wraps that dissolve in water

LONDON—British chocolate manufacturer Cadbury Schweppes said on Monday it hopes to chip away at the world's litter mountain with candy packages that dissolve in water.

Biodegradable trays that look like plastic but are made of water-soluble cornstarch polymer will be used for Cadbury's Milk Tray chocolates sold in Australia, the company said.

"There have been some discussions about using...the technology more widely both in Australia and elsewhere. However, all discussions are confidential at this stage," a Cadbury's spokeswoman said.

The material, developed in Australia by Plantic Technologies Limited, needs to be saturated with water in order to disintegrate and is not affected by humid conditions.

Plantic said the material cosmetically is indistinguishable or even superior to petrochemical products, but will cut down on waste.

"(It) dissolves upon contact with water to reduce significantly the environmental impacts of the packaging, whether it goes to landfill via the proper channels or is discarded as litter," Plantic said.

Cadbury could not immediately say how much less plastic it would use because of the new trays.

The products with the packaging will carry a logo to indicate the tray is made from the biodegradable material. *Reuters*

US SEC wants NYSE regulatory arm split

NEW YORK—US Securities and Exchange Commission Chair-William Donaldson believes the New York Stock Exchange's regulatory arm should be split from its market operations, The Wall Street Journal said on Tuesday.

Donaldson is pondering pushing for tougher changes in how the NYSE is regulated, the paper said, citing a person familiar with the thinking of Donaldson.

The paper on Monday cited a confidential SEC report that sharply criticized the NYSE for failing to police its floor-trading "specialist" firms and for ignoring violations in which investors were cheated of about $155 million in trades over three years.

The exchange said in a statement it would be inappropriate to comment on the newspaper's Monday report.

Considering a move to sever the regulatory unit represents a shift from Donaldson's recent public comments, the Wall Street Journal reported.

In late September, Donaldson suggested that splitting off the regulatory arm would be a mistake, the paper said.

Donaldson has not made any decisions on how such a move would be made, according to the paper. *Reuters*

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Regulators find rampant trading abuses in US funds

WASHINGTON—Federal regulators painted a picture of widespread trading abuses in the $7 trillion mutual fund industry on Monday as New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer threatened to slap funds with stiff penalties.

The Securities and Exchange Commission told lawmakers that more than a quarter of top brokerage firms have allowed customers to illegally trade mutual fund shares after hours and 10 percent of top fund groups may also have been involved in late trading.

Once seen as a safe haven for average investors, the mutual fund industry has become "the world's largest skimming operation," said Sen. Peter Fitzgerald, chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Financial Management.

The Illinois Republican described the industry as "a $7 trillion trough from which fund managers, brokers and other insiders are steadily siphoning off an excessive slice of the nation's household college and retirement savings." Half of all U.S. households have money in the nation's mutual funds, investment pools regulated by the SEC but recently the subject of probes by state regulators.

The SEC examined documents from 34 brokerages and 88 top fund groups as part of a probe into questionable trading practices including late trading and market timing.

Late trading is illegal and involves trading in fund shares after the close of trade at the close-of-trade price. Trading after the close is supposed to happen at the next day's price.

"We have opened up a window into a morass of conflicts of interests," Spitzer testified to the subcommittee.

Spitzer called for "disgorgement of all, and I repeat the word 'all,' fees earned with respect to any fund during the period .... there was illegal behavior."

SEC Enforcement division director Stephen Cutler testified that the SEC found more than 80 percent of fund groups allowed intermediaries to send in orders after closing time.

Securities lawyers have said intermediaries may be hiding late trading in batch orders they send to funds.

Cutler also said "almost 30 percent of ... broker-dealers indicate that they assisted market timers in some way." Market timing involves rapid dealing in fund shares to profit from stale pricing data. It can be illegal when a fund publicly bans it but then lets selected individuals do it.

Reuters

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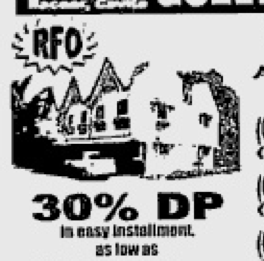

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1.6M C5 Nr The Fort
12T/mo. or 3Yrs No Int. or 10% D.P. LIPAT AGAD 2-4BR 15min Fr Mkti 0917-8169849

MKT NR AYALA BnewTwnhse/3stry/3br/2tb/grge P3.435M 8903461 loc 34

MANILA

930T nr UST 0920-8309744

NR LA SALLE TAFT BnewTwnhse/3stry/3br/3tb/grge P3.295M 8903461 loc 34

Nr UST 3.6M 4br 3tb 1cg Nr bank, Loan Ok Call 645-3731

PASIG

VVERDE 2 60m² 2M 9122304

VVERDE 3BR 1.7M T9124323

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THE CITY'S GARDEN VILLAGE
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Townhouse or Single Detached
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CONDO/TWNHSE

SAN JUAN

LE GRAN GHILLS 1BR/2BR Nice View •909-1322/26•

LOT

LAS PINAS

TALON 204m²@P4,000 639-1694 / 0917-8102903

MANILA

Nr Malacanang 570sqm 18T /sm Neg Call 645-3731

PASIG

NR.KAPITOLYO 13K 6453731

PIONEER COR. UNITED FRTG JOLLIBEE P40T/sqm 606 sqm 722-6578 • 671-4421

QUEZON CITY

ACROPOLIS cor lot AM Sun 514m²@34T/m² 6337601-03

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Xaviervill 2 Nice Loc 17,000T /sqm Call 645-3731

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FOREST HILLS 523m² Rush 9417081 / 09175413445

Twn&Cntry Hts 150m² 500T Rush Sale lowest price Irene 7346262 / 09192354645

PROVINCIAL

★TAGAYTAY LOTS★ Along H-way low dp/mo. 240m²-up Coldest Spot T6588704 Totie

MEMORIAL LOT

MLA. NORTH CEMETERY 2513527

WANTED TO BUY

Wack2 Royal Mansion Parking Slot (LG) 6337601-03

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

MAKATI

NR C5/D'FORT 3BR 09164465086

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

QUEZON CITY

ACROPOLIS front park 4BR Nice@45T/mo 6337601-03

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

Condotel 4 Rent Daily Monthly Burgos St. Makati Kingswood Tower 4 Rent Makati P. • Ocampo St. Call Emily 0918-9305233

Mkt.Studio UF 9T/FF 10T w/AC 2br 10.5Tup tel/prk •897-0417•

APARTMENT

QUEZON CITY

2BR nr PSBA/NCBA Aurora mkt 3Calderon St Marilag Vill Proj4

Nr SM City Edsa 2BR U&D w/Prkg 80A Pangasinan T-926-3934 • 0917-4796789

ROOM & BOARD

Mkt.Condo M/F Free Utlty 8906331

P'QUE P150 / 12hrs 827-5345

Prj3 new 3.5T stype 9137513

BUSINESS RENTAL

AYALA AVE T8181696/7586

MAKATI nr BUENDIA Ptamo 85/129/148/185m 1st class 8903461 loc 34 or 19 ofc hrs

Ortigas Ctr. 6714421
Grnd Flr 100m • P285/m
4th Flr 1000m • P280/m

Ortigas/Makati Grd/Upper 30;90;130;260;1,250m² P200-700/m² 6337601-03

LOAN & MORTGAGE

2% W/O TAKING CAR 3677523/24

SALRY BUSN OFW 524-3197

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

CORINTHIAN PLAZA PASEO DE ROXAS Tuscan Bldg.,Herrera St.LV For rent 14sqm-930sqm Call 811-3183, 811-3280 Look for Ronnie or Roy

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CARS

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- Gilmore Heights
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- El Jardin Del Presidente
- Golf Hill Terraces

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- Salcedo Park
- Paseo Parkview
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- Two Lafayette square
- One Roxas Triangle
- Ritz Towers
- Elizabeth Place
- The Manhattan Square
- Pacific Plaza, Fort Bonifacio
- Essensa Tower

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- Petron Mega Plaza
- The World Centre
- Paseo Center
- Burgundy Corporate Center
- Citibank Tower
- PhilAXA Tower
- 139 Corporate Center
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ORTIGAS CBD
- Richmonde Plaza
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CARS FOR RENT

L3•Cars• 9273453

1T/Hiace 9136710/4333682

A*TOYCO UDRIVE W/ DRIVER CARS/VANS/REVO 8006595

★Vans Coaster Bus 440-9171

Cheap Van Rental 9330311

L300/Vans 578-8917 (Roger)

MB HIACE URVAN 8276605

P1T '99STAREX 7318549

VANS 4 RENT 9412546

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 788-0357

1.5% EasyCarLoan 4000166 -67

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS COMMISSION
is immediately in need of

LABOR ARBITERS

Qualifications: Member of the Philippine Bar; must have been engaged in the practice of law in the Philippines for at least 7 years with at least 3 years experience or exposure in the field of labor management relations; RA 1080; must be of good moral character and computer literate.

Interested parties may submit their application and resumé to:

THE CHAIRMAN
Screening Committee for Third Level Positions
National Labor Relations Commission
PPSTA Bldg. No. 4, Banawe, Quezon City

Deadline of submission is on November 14, 2003.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NATIONAL MEAT INSPECTION COMMISSION
Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 924-3119; 924-7971; 924-7977
Telefax No.: 924-7973

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Meat Inspection Commission (NMIC) is inviting all accredited agencies to bid for SECURITY SERVICE (for CY 2004) with nationwide network/ branches or partnership with other local/regional security agencies.

Non-accredited agencies may still participate provided, all eligibility/pre-qualification requirements are submitted at a date stated below.

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) is Five Million Seven Hundred Forty Three Thousand Five Hundred Twelve Pesos (Php 5,576,400.00).

All interested parties may submit all necessary pre-qualification and bid documents to:

THE BIDDING COMMITTEE
National Meat Inspection Commission
Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 921-4473; 924-3119; 924-7971

List of pre-qualification documents for submission:

1. Name of company/business, address, telephone/fax number and year of incorporation/year business was established.
2. Incorporation papers from the Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) and/or from the Department of Trade and Industry for single proprietorship.
3. Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) Tax Clearance.
4. Value Added Tax (VAT) Registration Certificate.
5. Audited financial statements (balance sheets and profit and loss statements) for the current year.
6. Track record (list of customer references and their addresses).
7. Certified Xerox copy of the latest Business/License Permit for the current year.
8. Certified Xerox copy of the latest Court Clearance.
9. Certified Xerox copy of the latest DOLE Clearance.
10. Latest SSS Clearance.
11. List of Bank References.
12. List of equipment owned.
13. Certificate of registration and clearance with no pending complaint from the PNP.
14. Proof of Partnership with local/regional security agencies.

Deadline for submission of documents shall be on November 12, 2003 at exactly 10:00 a.m. at NMIC Property Section.

The pre-bid conference of pre-qualified bidders shall be on November 14, 2003 at 10:00 a.m., NMIC-Conference Room.

Only bids of pre-qualified bidders who participated in the pre-bid conference will be accepted and opened in the presence of bidders or their authorized representative on November 28, 2003 at 10:00 a.m., NMIC-Conference Room.

Bidders are required to post a 1% bid security of the approved Budget for the Contract in the form of cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check and bank draft or 2.5% if in the form of surety bond.

The NMIC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or to waive any formalities therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the government.

For more inquiries please contact Mr. ISABELO C. RODRIGUEZ at Property Section at above-stated address and telephone numbers.

(Sgd.) DR. MINDA S. MANANTAN
Chairperson, NMIC-BAC

(PDI - Oct 30 & Nov 5 2003)

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6567685

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

2% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

BUY/SELL

EDUCATION PLANS 7800106• 09177939632

PETS

DOG TRAINER 4528681

WANTED TO BUY

BUY • SELL • PAWN
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5633742 0917-8473744

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Other WATCHES, BEST PRICE
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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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Dermatologist 631-3496

MALE/FEMALE

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FREE CAREGIVER TRAINING 5280730 5899958 4043528

JOB HIRING 09223342867 AINA

OFC MKTNG STF 09274705152

Position Title: Item no.51 Daycare worker 1 Item no.30 Clerk LGU Presentation, Camarines Sur, College level

PROMO GIRLS 527-1590

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I MAKE P500,000.00/mo
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92.5 SILVER JWLRY WHLSALE /RETAIL XMAS SALE! 6273205

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RTW Wholesaler 3738821

RTW/BLOUSES P28 727-4934

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XMASLITES 3SETS/P100 Trees Ropelites Etc. 532-3909

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

CAREGIVER TRAINING 5271590

AUCTION SALE

MARA PAWNSHOP BR of 2230 M. Roxas St. Sta Ana Manila Auction Sale on NOV. 12, 2003 Wed., at 2:30 in the afternoon Respectively, June 14-July 12, 2003. SONS of J. LANUZA, Auctioneer
(PDI-November 05, 2003)

MARA PAWNSHOP I, II, III, IV and Comembo Br. of Makati City. AUCTION SALE on Nov 12, 2003 Wed. at 10:30, 11:30, 12:30, 1:30 and 8:30 in the morning and on the afternoon. Respectively, June 14 - July 12, 2003 SONS OF J. LANUZA, Auctioneer.
(PDI-November 05, 2003)

MI MARA of 251 Quirino Ave Baclaran P'que. M. M AUCTION SALE on November 12, 2003 Wednesday at 4:00 in the afternoon, Respectively. June 14 - July 12, 2003 Sons of J. Lanuza. Auctioneer
(PDI-November 05 2003)

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE ESTATE OF THE LATE LILIA SANTOS VILLA HAS BEEN EXTRAJUDICIALLY SETTLED BY THE HEIRS AS PER DOC. # 159, PAGE # 32, BOOK # 111, SERIES OF 2003 BEFORE NOTARY PUBLIC JOYCE C. G. BONDOC OF MUNTINLUPA CITY (PDI-OCT. 22, 29, NOV. 5, 2003)

DIRECT SALE

JEWELRY NO CAPITAL CONSIGN TRMS MUST B EMPLYD 9842865

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES LOGISTICS CENTER
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines Logistics Center Bids and Awards Committee invites all interested suppliers, manufacturers and dealers of Ordnance Items to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid for the supply and delivery to the AFP of Ordnance items with an approved budget of **P46M**, chargeable against **P787.106M ISO Fund.**

All interested parties are invited to attend the Pre-Bid Conference that will be held on **20 November 2003 at 9:00 o'clock a.m. at Daza Park Pavilion, AFP Logistics Center, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City**.

Tender Documents shall be available during office hours starting **03 November 2003** at Procurement Unit, AFP Logistics Center, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City, upon payment of the corresponding non-refundable fee.

A Special Power of Attorney, issued by the prospective bidder authorizing its representative to purchase the bid documents in its behalf, shall be required before issuance of the Tender Documents.

The bidders shall submit their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three (3) separate sealed envelopes at the AFPLC BAC Secretariat at Daza Park Pavilion, AFP Logistics Center, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Submission of the envelope shall be from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 o'clock a.m. on **09 December 2003**, after which the opening of bids shall immediately follow.

The AFP Logistics Center reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the AFP. The AFP Logistics Center likewise assumes no obligation for whatever expenses or losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

For more information, please call the AFPLC BAC Secretariat at telephone nos. **913-1175** or **911-6001** loc. **5434**, or visit our website at www.armedforces.mil.ph

(Sgd.) **REYNALDO S RAMIREZ**
Colonel PAF (GSC)
Chairman

(PDI - Oct. 29 & Nov. 5, 2003)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC
"BEWARE"

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE TWO (2) PARCELS OF LAND COVERED BY TCT NO. RT-3400 (313432) WITH 3,612 SQM. AND TCT NO. RT-3505 (313431) WITH 4,250 SQM., MORE OR LESS, FOR THE REGISTER OF DEEDS OF QUEZON CITY, **IN THE NAME OF MIDAS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, LOCATED AT GREEN MEADOWS SUBDIVISION, IS NOT IN ANY MANNER SUBJECT FOR SALE OR LOAN MORTGAGE WITH ANY BANK OR FINANCING INSTITUTION** AND THEREFORE, ANY TRANSACTION, OR DEALINGS BEING NEGOTIATED BY ANY PARTY OR ENTITY ON THE SAID PARCELS OF LAND IS UNAUTHORIZED AND FRAUDULENT.

FOR ANY QUESTION OR CLARIFICATION ON THE ABOVE, YOU MAY GET IN TOUCH WITH US AT TEL. NO. 671-2718/671-2785/363-3571 TO 74, FAX NO. 671-2719, MIDAS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, 103-104 E. RODRIGUEZ AVENUE, BRGY. UGONG, PASIG CITY.

(PDI–Oct. 22, 29 & Nov. 5, 2003)

URGENTLY NEEDED IN THE U.S.A.

200 NURSES

U.S. Principals are here
to interview candidates for **RN** positions in
Chicago, Illinois HOSPITALS
from **Nov. 5-11, 2003**

EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT
WILL BE OFFERED ON THE SPOT

Come personally with your resumé and credentials at:

Medical Staffing Resources, Inc.
POEA – 047-LB-082503-PL
Aguinaldo Building, 1522 Sta. Teresita Street
Villa Donata Subd., Alabang, Muntinlupa City
Telephone No. 772-0073, 772-0074

Where you find the best.

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JOBMarket ONLINE

VISIT US AT
www.jobmarketonline.com

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date : October 25, 2003
Loan No. : **1654-PHI: Secondary Education Development and Improvement Project (SEDIP)**
IFB No. : ADB-VEHZ-SEDIP

1. The Republic of the Philippines through the Department of Education (DepEd) has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) towards financing the cost of the Secondary Education Development and Improvement Project (SEDIP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for Supply and Delivery of Motor Vehicles.

2. The DepEd through the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Supply and Delivery of Motor Vehicles for the following:

Item No.	Type of Vehicle	Qty.	Recipient Institutions
1	Pick-up, 4x4 Wheel-Drive	1	DepEd Division of Benguet, La Trinidad, Benguet
2	Pick-up, 4x4 Wheel-Drive	1	DepEd Division of Ifugao, Lagawe, Ifugao
3	Pick-up, 4x4 Wheel-Drive	1	DepEd Division of Antique, San Jose, Antique
4	Pick-up, 4x4 Wheel-Drive	1	DepEd Division of Agusan del Sur, Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur
5	Pick-up, 4x4 Wheel-Drive	1	DepEd Division of Surigao del Sur, Tandag, Surigao del Sur

3. The mode of procurement shall be through Local Competitive Bidding (LCB).

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information on the bid forms and inspect the bidding documents from the BAC Office, Ground Floor, Mabini Bldg., DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Tel. #8321361 loc. 2019 or visit the DepEd Website at http://www.deped.gov.ph or the DBM Procurement Service at http://www.procurementservice.org.

5. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders starting October 30, 2003 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Three Hundred Pesos only (P300.00)

6. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of not less than two percent (2%) of the total bid amount and must be delivered in accordance with the instructions to Bidders on or before 10:00 a.m. on December 5, 2003 and will be publicly opened immediately thereafter at the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal I Building, DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Philippines.

7. Prior to the bid opening, a pre-bid conference will be held on November 17, 2003 at the same time and at the address indicated in paragraph 6.

8. The DepEd reserves the right to accept and reject any or all bids and to annul the bidding process at any time prior to award of Contract without incurring any liability to the affected bidders and to waive any minor informality or non-conformity in a bid which does not constitute a material deviation, provided such waiver will not prejudice or affect competitive ranking of any bid.

(Sgd.) **USEC. JUAN MIGUEL M. LUZ**
Chairperson
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–October 29 & Nov. 5, 2003)

TECHNICAL
EDUCATION
AND SKILLS
DEVELOPMENT
TESDA AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO BID

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) invites interested bidders to submit sealed bids for the following service requirements located in TESDA Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila and NITVET – NCTESD Marikina City.

BID PACKAGE I – JANITORIAL SERVICES
BID PACKAGE II – SECURITY SERVICES

All interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and secure the bidding documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **P500.00** starting **November 3, 2003** from the Procurement and Supply Division, 3rd Floor, TESDA Complex, Administration Building, East Service Road, South Superhighway, Taguig, Metro Manila with telephone numbers **893-82-96 & 817-40-76** local **313 - 315**.

However, TESDA shall not allow any firm or corporation to submit bids in both service requirements, much more to win and be awarded of both service contracts. Any attempt to deceive TESDA of this condition shall lead to disqualification or termination of contract.

A pre-bid conference shall be held at the Conference Room, Office of the Regional Director, Region IV-A on **November 18, 2003 at 9:00 P.M.** for Janitorial services and **2:00 p.m.** for Security services. All prospective bidders are required to attend.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in local currency in the form of *cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit* of not less than **one percent (1%)** of the total bid price and must be delivered at the Conference Room, Office of the Regional Director, Region IV-A on or before **9:00 a.m.** for Janitorial services and **2:00 p.m.** for Security services of **December 2, 2003.** Thereafter, the bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representative(s) who attended. Late bids will not be accepted.

TESDA reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any informality in the bids received or to accept such bids which maybe considered most responsive and advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ALCESTIS M. GUIANG**
Director General

(PDI – Oct. 29 & Nov. 5, 2003)

OBITUARIES

NATIVIDAD JAVIER Vda de ABEJUELA

Peacefully passed away in the Grace of our Lord
in Sterling, Virginia, U.S.A.
on October 29, 2003 at the age of 94

Her bereaved children:
Bernardo
Rosario and Romeo Umali
Mariano
Fermin & Marilynn
Ramon & Ma. Aurora
Jose & Rowena

Grandchildren: **Mercedes, Diana, Dulce, Daisy, Dorothy, Antonio, Divina and Bernadine; Angelica, Katrina and Patricia; Michael, Maha Rebekah and Manoel; Marie Michelle, Margret Christine and Marie Rose.**

Great grandchildren, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains will arrive on November 6, 2003 and will lie in state at the Capilla dela Virgen Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will be on November 9, 2003 at the Manila Memorial Park after the 2:45 PM funeral mass at Santuario de San Antonio.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Church of the Poor Apostolate (COPA) – St. James the Great Parish will be highly appreciated.

ATTY. JULIANO "LENY" ALOVERA ALBA

Former CONGRESSMAN, 7th Congress
Former City Mayor of Roxas City, Capiz

Peacefully joined his Creator
on Saturday, November 1, 2003 at the age of 80.

He is survived by his wife **SHIRLY** and daughter **EMIE**, sister **LOURDES**, brother-in-law **ALFONSO**, nephews, nieces and grandchildren who request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at their residence at Burgos Ilaya, Roxas City.

Necrological services will be held on November 8, 2003 at Dinggoy Roxas Civic Center.

Interment will take place on Saturday, November 8, 2003 at the Roxas City Catholic Cemetery following the 2:00 p.m. Holy Mass at the Immaculate Concepcion Metropolitan Cathedral.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."
John 3:16

Gervasia Cañedo de Veyra

Peacefully joined her Creator
on November 3, 2003 at the age of 75.

Her bereaved husband **ASPREN**; children **OPHEL & FRANK RUBINO, LOTTIE & ARIS TOPACIO, TINA & RICKY ILACAD, DAN & LYN DIZON**, and **BEE & MANOLO CRUZ**; grandchildren **ROSETTA, ARTIE, CHARO & CHARLENE, ERICA, KARLA, ISAIAH & JOSHUA, DANIELLE** and **BEA**; brother **GENE & MAY CAÑEDO**; sisters **LOME & MERING CAÑEDO**; nephews and nieces: **PAUL & ANNIE** and **PATRICK, NIÑO, TRIZA** and **FAE**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies at St. Joseph Chapel of the Holy Family Parish, Lilac St., Roxas District, Quezon City.

Cremation schedule will be announced later.

ROSARIO "CHARING" LLORCA VDA. DE MORENO

of Quezon City & Odiongan, Romblon
Widow of former Secretary of Public Works
Florencio M. Moreno, Sr.
August 13, 1914 - November 1, 2003

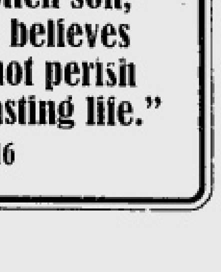
The bereaved children **Miggy** (†), **Juanito, Junie, Gil, Arturo** (†), **Rosa Flor, Ed-Anton, Nenita, Charito, Victor** and **Glenn**; sons and daughters-in-law, grandchildren, great grandchildren, sisters, nephews and nieces and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Body lies in state at the Sta. Rita de Casia Parish, Phil-Am Homes, West Avenue, Quezon City.

Necrological service will be held on Friday at 8:30 p.m. at the Sta. Rita Chapel I, and interment will be at the La Loma Cemetery on Saturday, November 8, 2003 after the 9 o'clock Mass.

In Memoriam

BENJAMIN "MANG BEN" LEUNG, Sr.



(September 19, 1927 – November 5, 2000)
is lovingly remembered by his family on the 3rd Anniversary of his Death.

Prayers will be offered for him during the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the Santa Cruz Church and N. P. Jesus Nazareno de Quiapo in Manila, Santo Domingo Church and Lourdes Church in Q.C. at 8:00 a.m. today, November 5, 2003.

Prayers are requested for the eternal repose of his soul.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 10:39

> *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die."*
> **John 11:25-26**

MARIA DE LEON DIMAYA

Beloved wife of the late **ISAIAS P. DIMAYA**, the matriarch and owner of **Maria De Leon Transportation Incorporated**, Laoag City.

Peacefully joined her Creator on Saturday, November 1, 2003 at the age of 89.

Her loving children:
Ely & Esther (†)
Vicki & Ding
Allan & Baby

Grandchildren:
Darren, Jon & wife Angela, & Brian
Kevin & Keith
Francis, Alaine & Roland Jr.

Great grandchildren:
Katherine & Ethan

in-laws, nephews and nieces, relatives and friends, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the ancestral home – A.G. Tupaz Street, Laoag City.

Funeral Mass will be celebrated at the St. William's Cathedral in Laoag City on November 17, 2003 at 8:30 a.m.

Interment will follow at the Laoag City Catholic Cemetery.

We, the family of the late

GABINA SANTIAGO ABACAN

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude
for your sympathy during the time
of our bereavement.

To those who spent time with us,
kept vigil, offered prayers and flowers,
please accept our sincere thanks.

Ray & Estrie
Tony Jr. & Mary Jane
Ogie & Lita Ingco
Kito & Linda
Lino & Cecille
Enchong & Anne
Gil & Bel

Virgilio "Ver" Masalunga Lunar

Supervision & Examination Analyst Dept. of Rural Banks
Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Beta Sigma Fraternity 64-B Exodus UPLB
Knights of Columbus
Couples for Christ
of Lusacan, Tiaong, Quezon & Cuenca, Batangas

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord Jesus
on October 30, 2003 at the age of 58.

His loving wife **Constancia "Tessie" M. Lunar;** children **Ronan, Joisa, Aivic & Airen;** brothers **Dr. Gaudencio "Guding"** & wife **Tere Lunar** & **Nolasco "Noli"** & wife **Juliet Lunar** and sisters **Nemesia "Nesia" M. Lunar, Teodora "Doring" L. Cuevas** married to **Fiscal Emilio Cuevas, Erlinda "Linda"** & husband **Felix Belen, Dra. Iluminada L. Comia** married to **Mayor Enrique "Tito" Comia** and **Araceli "Cely"** & husband **Lito Farol**; and all nephews, nieces, and relatives, request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Maculot St., Cuenca, Batangas – **Mayor Tito & Dra. Comia's** residence.

Interment will take place on Saturday, November 8, 2003 at Cuenca Catholic Cemetery in Cuenca, Batangas following 2:00 p.m. Holy Mass at St. Isidore Catholic Church.

"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again."
2 Corinthians 5:4-5

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

CARIDAD G. BANGALAN–SAULOG

Wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy, extended help and assistance, and who in countless ways, condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

"... absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

AGAPITO "ITO" CORDERO CORDOVA

of Bauan, Batangas and BF Homes, Parañaque City

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on November 3, 2003 at the age of 72.

His loving wife **Lilia Enriquez Cordova**; children **Lilibeth, Amy & Frank, Marivic, Jun & Jasmin, Albert & Brenda, & Juan Paolo**; grandchildren **Issa, CJ, Fatima, Morene, Clereece** and **Abigail**; relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Yakal Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park) Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Saturday, November 8, 2003 after the 3:00 p.m. Mass at the Manila Memorial Park.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
and bank-to-bank payments

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY REQUIEMS
FREE OBIT DESIGN

Web development provides Pinoys a crack at the world market

By Candy G. Villanueva

FROM the concrete jungles of Makati to the bamboo huts of Boracay, almost everything is available to anyone anywhere at the click of the button. Anyone with computer and Internet access that is. In the mood for shopping in the middle of the night? Hundreds of online shopping sites can satisfy your craving to spend. Missed the last NBA championship game? Log on to get a blow-by-blow account of the game, including scores and statistics.

Think of any topic under the sun and the World Wide Web is more than likely to have it.

Riding the crest

Internet surfing has become a way of life and riding the waves of this information super highway are the web developers of the country. Web developers are designers and creators of web sites or electronic pages that supply information, entertainment and education.

One of these people riding the crest of the Internet is David Cuenco, who heads a team of web developers at EyeDream Wireless Design Studio. This company is responsible for sites like www.Mod.net.ph, www.sure-express.com <http://www.sure-express.com> and www.pelikula.net <http://www.pelikula.net>.

Combining art and technology, Cuenco and his team create visual electronic pages known as web pages. A web site is composed of a web page or several linked web pages. A basic web page is a page coded in HTML (hypertext markup language), an online document accessible by any browser. Web pages may be illuminated with color, graphics, sound and moving pictures.

Multi-dimensional job

Web developers usually handle overall site design and structure, coding for back-end operations and database administration and site security. Web developing can be a continuous job. Once the site is done, the developer doesn't always get to hang up his hat and call it a day. Most sites update and change looks and content to keep surfers interested. In most cases, it is also the developer's job to handle regular maintenance and administer changes and updates.

"The web designer's job is a dual-faceted position. Aside from the technical knowledge and skills needed to accomplish the job, he also needs to be familiar with marketing and business operations," says Cuenco.

Web designers are usually graduates of Computer Science or any computer related course. Nowadays, most courses offer at least one subject or a few units in web design.

Required training

Even those without formal computer education, but well-versed with the development process and technical limitations of web development, have also joined the bandwagon. With the advent the World Wide Web, the web development industry has become a free-for-all venture. As Cuenco would put it, "In today's real world setting, anybody who is capable of self-instruction and determined enough can be a web designer. The Internet by itself is the ultimate resource of information."

ALL ABOUT
WORK

But this does not mean that merely getting a reliable PC, a generous memory drive, unlimited Internet connection and having creativity and time are the only ingredients to becoming a successful web developer. Cuenco advises, "For those familiar with the classic Wordstar, they can do HTML. HTML in 24 hours, Visual Quickstart HTML 4.0 and HTML for Dummies will be a good take off point for those who wish to learn the basics."

Sources

Cuenco recommends some sources for learning web development. He advises, "Open-source has gained significant ground over the years, and has established itself as a stable platform for web site development. I personally recommend PhP (www.php.net <http://www.php.net>) and MySQL (www.mysql.org<http://www.mysql.org>) if you wish to learn how to build dynamic web sites. There are several books in the market that provide learning information on this. The easiest one to digest is Visual Quickstart PhP/MySQL. If you plan to take the Microsoft way, you can learn on ASP and SQLServer. For those who wish to pursue a career in web administration, they should learn Linux or Windows 2000."

Cuenco also adds that if your budget cannot include books, you can always rely on www. google. com for tutorials.

Global market

Anyone with a legitimate business is a potential client for web developers. Even foreign companies are target markets for local developers. "Through our government's best efforts to promote the ICT sector, the Philippines has been fortunate enough to receive a lot of outsourcing projects. Striking a balance between highly skilled professionals, low labor costs, flexibility and creativity, foreign companies opt to secure our services because our country can certainly offer the best 'bang-for-the-buck' proposals," Cuenco explains.

Cuenco is confident about the capabilities of local developers. "The local web designers are getting better by the day. I'd say we're up to par with foreign companies." Given the right resources and excellent training, Cuenco believes that local web developers "are able to demonstrate to the world that we are very much capable of taking on any web-related project."

DAVID Cuenco

PHOTO BY CANDY VILLANUEVA

Awards

Web developers can also count on a local award giving body to recognize their efforts. Yearly, the Philippine Web Awards honors the best Filipino-created web sites. Known as the Webby Awards, the yearly event gives finalists and awardees an opportunity to generate more site audiences and new businesses. Tracing its roots from the US-based Webby Awards, the Philippine Webby Awards also gives developers a chance to be recognized by their peers and the mainstream media. This year, the 6th Webby Awards will award outstanding web creations in 18 categories.

But a Webby award or nomination is simply cherry on a sundae. As in life, a job well done is a reward in itself. "Doing a good job in the eyes of the client is a key challenge," says Cuenco. Of course, the paying clients are only a part of the audience. Once a site is up and running, the designers work their processors and their fingers off to maintain a continuous flow of "visitors" or encourage busy site "traffic." But in the end, many, like Cuenco, live for the "information high." Says Cuenco, "You can't get one too many ideas in a day."

How to create a great impression

By Ernie O. Cecilia, FPM

DO you ever wonder why most successful people have pleasing personalities? Why do some people leave great impressions while others seem unpleasant and forgettable? Does feeling good at work or business contribute to one's success?

One of the greatest books that I had read in my youth was Dale Carnegie's "How to Win Friends and Influence People," which was first published in 1936. To this day, I remember many of the important lessons from this foremost guru of human relations. His ideas and principles still ring true even in this more complicated, sophisticated and wired world.

One of these is: If you want to succeed in career or business, make other people like you. Here are a few simple but tested ways by which you can instantly create great impressions, enough for people to start liking you:

1. Show interest in people. If you want people to be interested in you, be interested in them first. Whether you are in the business of selling capital goods and consumer products or ideas and information, or selling your services to an employer, you must be interested in people.

Author John C. Maxwell tells us that "people don't care what you know unless they know that you care." This seems ironic to some people who try to impress others by first showing off what they know. If we want other people to get interested in us, both Carnegie and Maxwell advocate that we must first show genuine interest in other people. We can show genuine interest by listening to them, asking them to talk about themselves and their interests and showing empathy to their wants, needs and goals.

2. Light up your face. Working or doing business can be fun and pleasurable, not hard or painful. When you smile, work becomes lighter and easier and you tend to invite helping hands. A frown drives away customers and people who can help carry your load. Smile, even if you don't feel like doing it. A smile is contagious and you'll be surprised what a little smile can do to you and your coworkers.

The great psychologist and philosopher William James theorizes, "Action seems to follow feeling, but really, action and feeling go together; and by regulating the action, which is under the more direct control of the will, we can indirectly regulate the feeling, which is not." So, just keep smiling, and soon enough, you'll feel good. I assure you that no one feels good being grouchy or grouched at.

3. Listen. It is ironic that people find it easy to talk and difficult to listen, despite the fact that we have two ears and just one mouth. Listening has become an art or a specialty, maybe because not too many engage in it. But the people who have mastered the art of listening have earned hosts of friends, clients, customers and fans. Even in a job interview, it pays to listen to the interviewer, ask him questions and give him the chance to tell the job applicant about the job and the company. On the job, the superior's expectations must be listened to and taken to heart. At the end of the day, the boss will determine where your career goes.

Listening pays off a lot in terms of goodwill in business. Many business ventures have folded up simply because they forgot to listen to their customers. It pays to heed the adage, "If we don't listen to our customers, our competitors will."

4. Know the other person's interests. In business or career, the more important thing to know and talk about is the interest of the other person— the customer or the boss. How many times have you heard a salesperson say, "Please buy my goods so that I will have a "*buena mano*." If you are the customer, you are least interested about the seller's sales; you are more interested in the value you will get from buying his wares.

At work, try to help your boss look good by helping him do his job well. Show genuine interest in the career of your boss, so that when he gets promoted, he will surely recommend you to take his place. This is a better strategy than pestering him with your incessant requests or insinuations for your promotion or pay increase.

Talk to your customer and find out what kind of product or service he needs. Talk to your boss about the goals and results he wants from his organization. These are their interests. But when you help them get what they want, you shall have served your interests the best way you can.

5. Give utmost importance to others. "The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated," says William James. Wittingly or unwittingly, the greatest men and philosophers of all time have invariably preached the same principle— Confucius, Lao-Tse, Zoroaster, Buddha and even Jesus Christ. This principle must be so powerful that whoever abides by it will benefit tremendously and whoever disregards it will suffer great losses.

When you genuinely make others important, you make others feel good. You also create a great impression in their minds. By subordinating your importance to theirs, you unknowingly elevate your esteem and respectability in the eyes of others.

These principles have been practiced by so many successful people and have been taught by countless great men, so that others might benefit from such teachings. Simply, they tell us to put others first and ourselves last. And, true to His word, the Lord makes sure that "he who is first shall be last, and he who is last shall be first."

(Mr. Cecilia is the president and CEO of EC Business Solutions and Career Center, a business and human resources consulting firm. He is a past president of the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines. Email feedback to erniec@edsamail. com.ph.*)*

Steps in collaborative selling process

By Dr. Tony Alessandra

(The following is a continuation of the article, "Steps in the collaborative selling process," published last Oct. 22. In that article, the first three steps—target, contact and explore—in the collaborative selling process were explained.)

The next three steps in collaborative selling are as follows:

Collaborate

It is at this point after an in-depth exploration of a prospect's situation that collaborative salespeople talk about their products or services. Naturally, they are discussed in the context of prospects' needs or opportunities.

Collaborative salespeople never dictate solutions to their prospects. Instead, they form "partnerships" in which prospects play an active role in the search for the best solution.

The "collaborate" phase of the sale is conducted in the spirit of "let's work together on the solution and together build a commitment to its successful implementation." This team approach to problem solving ensures that prospects will be committed to solutions. By making customers equal partners in problem solving, collaborative selling reduces or eliminates the risk that is inherent in the customer's decision-making process.

Confirm

Keep in mind that, in every phase of the collaborative selling process, the salesperson and prospect have communicated well. Collaborative salespeople move on to the next phase of the sales process only after they have received assurances that their customers are in agreement with them on everything that has been discussed.

This agree-as-you-go process eliminates the need to "close" the sale or handle objections. Most objections have surfaced long before this point. If resistance does occur, the salesperson simply gathers more information or clarifies a detail.

With collaborative selling, the sale is a matter of when and not if. Confirming the sale is the logical conclusion to an on-going communication and problem-solving process. There is no need to "close" them. People commit when all their buying criteria are met.

ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO BUCCAT

Assure

This phase of the collaborative sales process begins immediately after the sale has been confirmed. Collaborative salespeople keep in touch after the sale. They communicate regularly about delivery dates, installation, training, and other relevant matters. They make sure their customers are satisfied with their purchases. They help customers track their results and analyze the effectiveness of the solution.

Collaborative selling is the key to differentiation on the micro level. It represents an obsession with quality and customer satisfaction. It reflects a high degree of professionalism and a primary focus on relationships rather than transactions. It is clear that collaborative selling is a mutual-win situation, one that provides increased security to both parties. This increased security is exactly what customers want and need, given the market changes that are occurring so rapidly.

Collaborative selling is a philosophy and practice that is being used today by enlightened salespeople; and it is clearly the sales process of the future. Collaborative selling helps professional salespeople build large, loyal customer bases that generate future sales, provide referrals, and act as lifetime annuities.

(Dr. Alessandra is the author of "The Platinum Rule" and a motivational speaker based in the US. Visit his web site at www.alessandra.com.*)*

Prepare ahead, present well

From page B14

sound system and seating arrangement an hour or even a day before the scheduled presentation. Do a run-through if possible.

Come early for the presentation to calm you down and to avoid starting your presentation on the defensive with explanations why you're late. Realize it's alright to feel nervous because it's your body telling you to be ready.

Visualize a great presentation and an equally great response from your audience.

Necessary skill

If you want to get anywhere in the corporate world—selling goods or services, or pitching new ideas and concepts to higher management or potential customers—you've got to learn to present. You can't simply allow a pre-recorded video, brochure or PowerPoint presentation or other people to do all the talking. At one point, the manager or the customer would want to hear you make the pitch. There's nothing like having a real person up close and personal to listen to and throw questions at and exchange ideas with at later on.

Constantly brushing aside or grumbling with each presentation affects chances for better income and advancement. You lose out as well on the personal satisfaction of having gotten up and forwarded your own ideas. You can't be like Dennis all your working life, hating every presentation opportunity or being content as a backroom player and a spectator. You've just got to overcome your presentation fears and learn how to do it well

(Mr. Sarmenta is a broadcaster, college professor at the Ateneo Department of Communication and producer of PR tools. He has lectured extensively on presentation skills to teachers, journalists, corporate executives and employees.)

E-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph

PEOPLE at WORK

Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Subsection Editor Regina Galang Reyes

Speech therapist finds special job for special children

By Mario M. Banzon

CAREER TALES

SPEECH therapist Rina Chua Chiaco remembers the first time she encountered an individual with special needs. She was a sister of a family friend and spent the night at their house. "I was very scared the first time I saw her because physically she looked different," she says.

If she felt fear then, now she welcomes special children with joy and passion. The transformation, however, was by no means dramatic. She just learned more about them. Chiaco has since finished a degree in Speech Pathology at UP Manila, earned a master's degree in Special Education at the University of Florida, and is currently a speech pathologist at Chosen Children Village, a foundation that takes care of physically and mentally challenged children who are abandoned by their parents.

Good use

"When I went to the Chosen Children to visit, I observed that the setting is the closest to what they have in the US," says Chiaco, who just arrived in Manila after spending two years abroad. The village is a sprawling 2.2-hectare site situated in the outskirts of Silang, Cavite. It includes a haven for the children, a rehabilitation center, a chapel and a well-equipped school.

"I'm basically a speech therapist here at Chosen Children," says Chiaco. "I work in the rehabilitation center and I have six patients. I help them in developing their speech and language." A speech pathologist's work basically entails evaluating and treating patients with communication disabilities, including stroke victims. "It's a whole range," she says. "We treat toddlers as well as adults, but since the population of Chosen Children are children, I'm working with children."

For Chiaco, however, working with special children has a special meaning for her. "There is a tendency to consider them inferior to regular children because they appear different and seem to be incapable of doing the same things as other kids," she says. "But there is much that the children can do. And I want to be an instrument in bringing that out and showing everyone that the kids can be so much more than what people perceive."

Right way

And what people typically perceive of special children is something that she intends to change. "Don't call them names like *malas*, *sira ulo*, or hopeless," she advises. "It degrades the children because they can understand. Even if they are mentally challenged, somehow they will feel and understand it. Special children deserve equal opportunity as regular kids, to be given the chance to go beyond the limitations dictated by those around them." According to Chiaco, special children are, in fact, at times more sensitive than normal kids. They get easily affected when they are shouted at or when punished. She advises that it's always better to observe the child first and analyze what makes him behave in a certain way before resorting to any disciplinary action. "For special children, you need to have so much more compassion, so much more patience, so much more understanding and love," she explains. "Especially for the kids here because these are abandoned children and they don't have families. If you give regular kids 100 percent love then maybe the kids at Chosen Children need to get 300 percent."

RINA Chiaco with her special children at the Chosen Children Village

PHOTO BY MARIO BANZON

The job could be a handful at times but for Chiaco it is the precious moments that make it all worthwhile. One such experience was with a particular child who Chiaco found difficult to handle. One day, after having one of his bad spells, he went up to Chiaco and told her he had a surprise. He showed her some gelatin that he made in one of his classes. "Here," he said, "Just give it to me (after you finish eating) because I have to bring the spoon back to the kitchen," the child said, walking with her for a speech therapy session. "I was so touched," relates Chiaco. Later that day, she met the child again in the cottage. He was playing with a sticker. "Wow, Winnie the Pooh, that's my favorite," Chiaco told the child. He told her to ask another child for more stickers but when he found out that there were no more stickers, he peeled his sticker from his hand. "Ms Chiaco, yours *na lang*," he said, placing it on her skin.

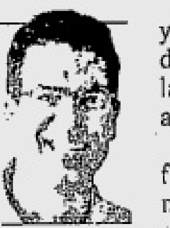
While Chiaco finds her work with the children inspirational, she also makes it a point to recharge her energies. "When I get home on weekends, I devote my time to my family and to my singles community in church," she says. "For me that's recharging because I get to spend time with my friends and catch up while I serve the Lord through various activities. But it's not purely *gimik* because He is at the center of everything we do."

Chiaco attributes to her faith her optimism and enthusiasm for her work. In fact, she used to think that at 27 years old, she should've achieved more, but now, she says, "I feel that I am where I should be, doing what I should be doing. I always pray about where I should go and I feel that I am exactly where God wants me to be."

How can you help a customer find money?

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner



DEAR WW: I have a big potential customer who says he wants my product but doesn't have the budget. Should I change my terms to land him?

He's Budget Challenged

As much as I love technology, I love tech horror stories even better. Check this out. A German couple bought a fancy new car with the latest high-tech navigation system. They were cruising along the road when their on-board computer showed a bridge ahead. What the navigation system didn't know was that the bridge was out. The couple, trusting technology over their own eyes, drove right off the road-end and into the river.

Now, that couple and their navigation system are a lot like you and your customer. Sure, you want to trust what your customer tells you, but you also want to verify that information. It may very well be that they are budget challenged, but does that really mean that there's no money at all? Here are some tips for "helping" your customer find money elsewhere. For more, check out Josh Gordon's book, "Tough Calls" (Amacom, 1997).

Resourcefulness

Different budget? Companies don't call them slush funds, but they often have money lying around waiting to be spent. They may be called the capital budget, or R&D, or Y2K funds. Encourage your client to prowl for money. Another trick is to break down your fee into different components. For example, separate the technology from the consulting and you just might be able to draw from two separate budgets.

End of year money? It's a cruel and unusual punishment, but bureaucracies often penalize departments for NOT spending money by deducting the amount of unspent funds from their next year's budget. Twice clients have asked if they could pay me my entire fee upon signing the contract so they could spend the money before year's end. Ironically, both thanked ME for my "flexibility."

Can you accept a mix of cash and stock? I recently read about a Silicon Valley building contractor who accepted stock instead of cash for a kitchen repair. Two years later, the $30,000 job's stock options were worth $600,000. Sure, it's a gamble, but more and more companies are doing it. Even CBS has parlayed ads on the network for major stakes in Internet companies.

Options

Bill later? Maybe your client is telling the truth. Maybe she has no money in her budget. But what about next year's budget? Explore if sliding your contract into the next fiscal year will make it easier to say yes.

Just say no? You hate to lose a sale, especially when you're so close you can see the customer's nose hairs wiggling. But better to lose the sale than reduce your price or terms too much to make it. If they like you as much as they say they do, they're likely to come back later. If not, you spare yourself a red-ink headache.

The moral of the story: don't follow your customer's information blindly and you won't end up getting soaked.

Poll results

Here are the results of our last workingwounded.com/ABCnews.com poll: What do you do when the customer says they don't have the budget to buy?

—Say goodbye, 14.3%

—Help them find the money to make the buy, 38.4%

—Build a relationship for a sale (hopefully) in the bye and bye, 47.2%

Our winning strategy for helping a customer to find the money to buy comes from Greg S. in cyberspace. "Frequently customers have contacts in the industry that you don't have. Use those contacts. Provide a discount on the price for each additional customer that your potential customer refers to you. In other words, consider the "discount" to be the equivalent of advertising. The customer gets a better deal, and you get free advertising and initial sales work from your customer."

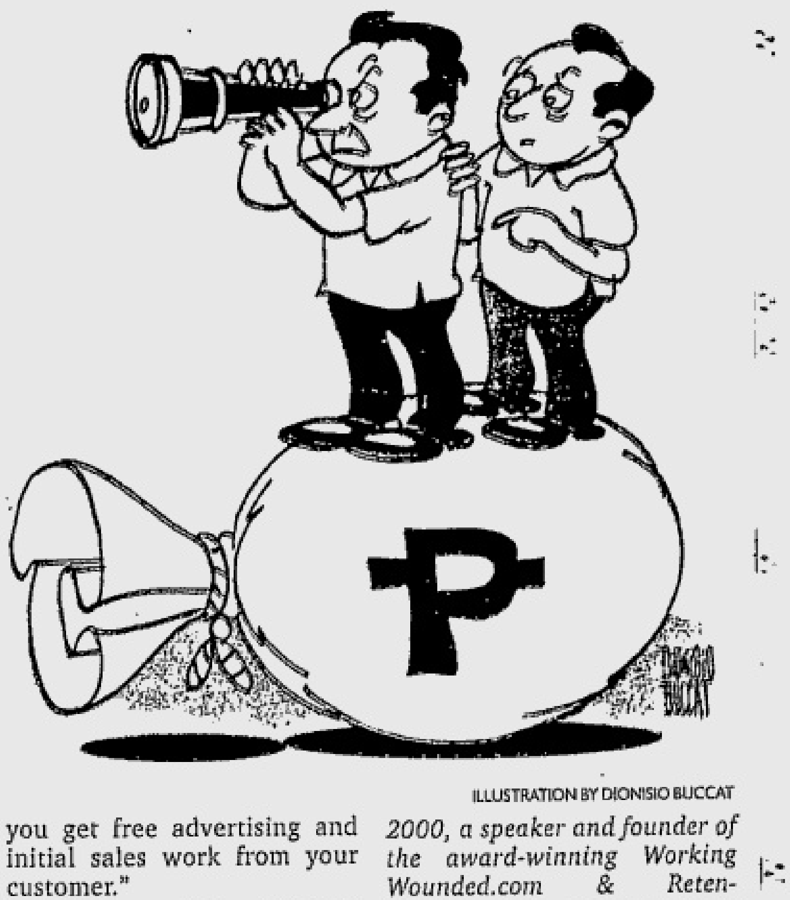


ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO BUCCAT

(Mr. Rosner is the author of bestsellers "The Boss's Survival Guide," McGraw Hill 2001, and "Working Wounded," Warner 2000, a speaker and founder of the award-winning Working Wounded.com & RetentionEvangelist.com. He is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. Email him at bob@workingwounded.com.*)*

Prepare ahead, present well

By Sev Sarmenta

(This is the second part of the article "Present well, move ahead" which was published last week.)

IN presentations, nothing beats preparation to help manage fears and anxieties. Here are some tips to presenting well.

Do an outline

Prepare your content in a working outline. This will identify key messages and give you an idea of how much time you will spend discussing them. Answer these questions in the outline: What do I want to get across? What do I want the audience to be saying or thinking at the end of the pitch? What do I want the audience to "take home" when I am done?

The outline will give your presentation a framework or some legs to stand on. It determines how much you will research, write, deliver and put into graphic form in the presentation. Also, when you outline, you will be able to deliver your message in a lot less time than what was allotted since the parameters are going to be well defined. Don't feel that you've missed out on something when you finish early. The busy executives and customers of today will appreciate the brief but concise presentation. As long as you touched on every key point you want to get across within the time limit, you've done your job.

Conversational delivery

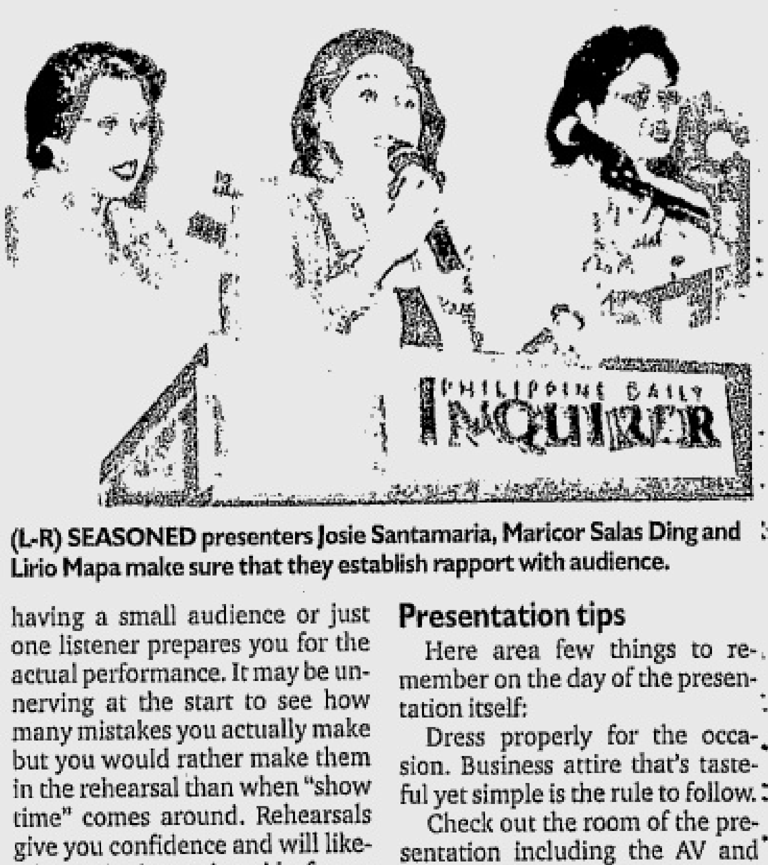
In preparing a delivery style, it should be noted that the presentation is neither a speech nor an oration. More often than not, the presentation is a more intimate communication scenario. The loud, bombastic delivery seems to be out of place in this time and age. Wilder recommends a dialogue with your audience, going as far as speaking in a very conversational tone, even if there is a microphone. This seems like a more precise way to make a connection with your presentation audience. It likewise lessens your tension because it will feel like you're talking intimately with another person.

This conversational delivery will also allay fears about presenters who are wary that their voices are too squeaky, high pitched or dull. Talking casually will bring out who you are and that helps a lot in getting sincerity across.

Rehearse

Ever wondered why dancers practice in front of a mirror? This is to check on the dance because the mirror doesn't lie (aside from the fact that it's a good technique to teach looking straight at the audience). The same holds true for rehearsing for presentations-doing it in front of a mirror helps you check on what you're doing right or wrong, allows you to try gestures or mannerisms and gives you an idea of how you're getting across.

Aside from working in front of a mirror, rehearsing at the place of the presentation, if at all possible, is another sound preparation. Based on my experiences in corporate events, many good CEOs want to rehearse their major presentations before they actually deliver them. They want to check the podium, the sound system or how the prepared graphics will flow with the text. The rehearsal gives the presenter an enormous amount of confidence when the actual presentation is made. By presentation time, it's almost like a second performance!



(L-R) SEASONED presenters Josie Santamaria, Maricor Salas Ding and Lirio Mapa make sure that they establish rapport with audience.

Looking at the mirror while practicing, being videotaped, having a small audience or just one listener prepares you for the actual performance. It may be unnerving at the start to see how many mistakes you actually make but you would rather make them in the rehearsal than when "show time" comes around. Rehearsals give you confidence and will likewise assist in getting rid of your presentation fears.

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12 THE PHONE

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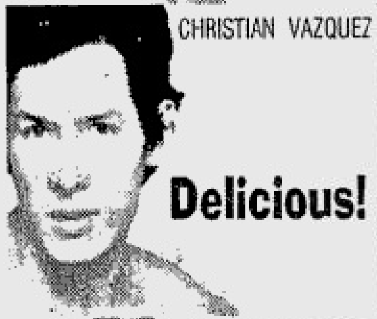
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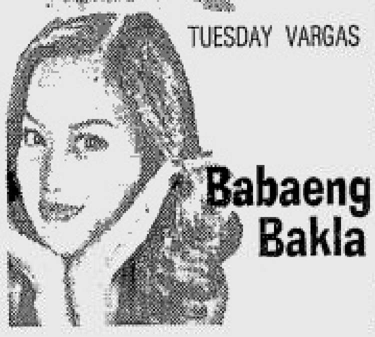
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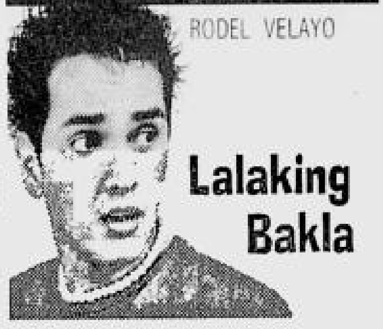
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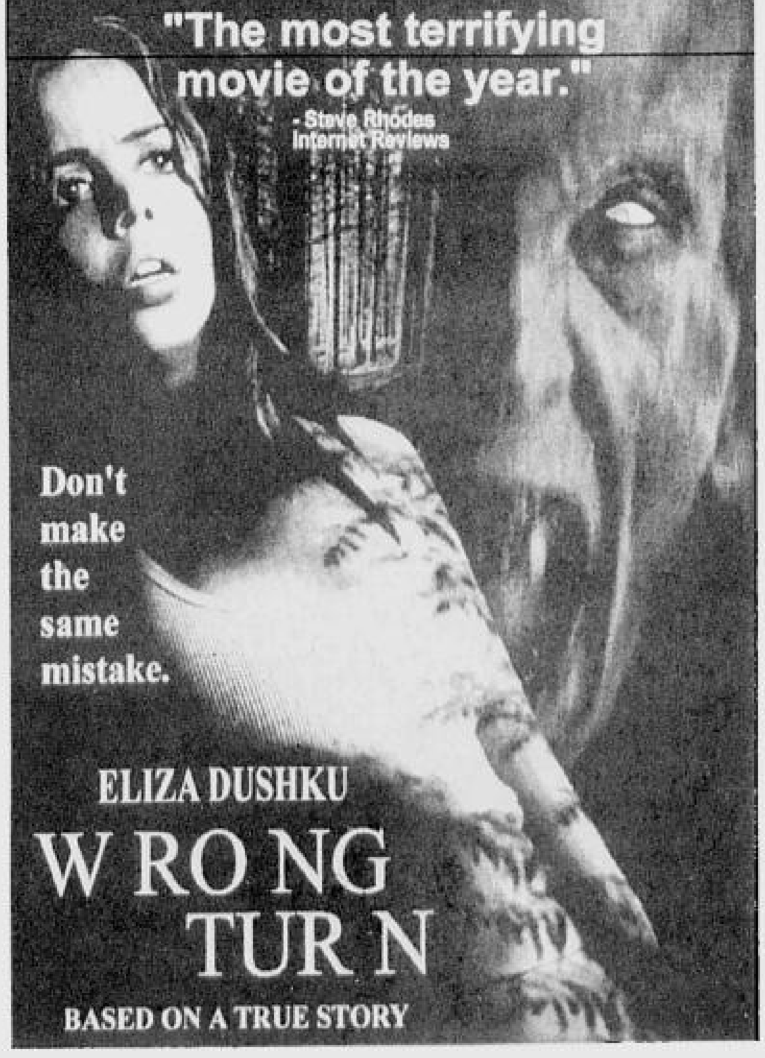

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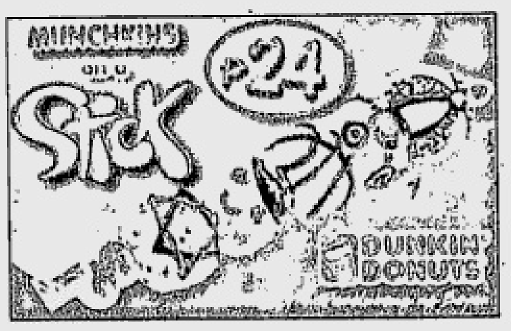
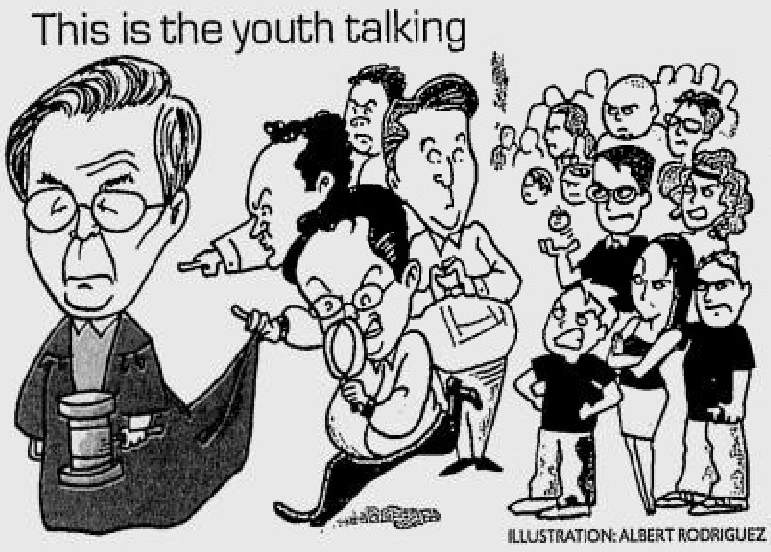


2BU! SURVEY

What's your stand on the Davide impeachment?



Power-hungry politicians, listen.
This is the youth talking

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

DAVIDE'S impeachment case is a clear picture of how rotten the government is—that even the Supreme Court can be penetrated by the termites of politics.—**Giles, 23, engineer**

Politics sucks, and I don't want to take part in it. —**Maui, 20, student/writer**

I think it's crazy! Doesn't it make you just want to scream till January?—**Walter, copywriter**

I agree with the Commission on Audit's decision. Davide is not guilty of anything. Congress should shut up and focus on more important issues.—**Leidy, 20, sales representative**

I think that the trial should go on. It's the only way people could know the truth, and it is the only way Justice Davide can prove his innocence, if indeed he is innocent.—**Ed Castillo, 23**

Once again, government officials have shamed the Filipino people. —**Sarah, 20, UP**

I think it's very much politicized. If Congress saw an anomaly in the use of the JDF, why not probe and investigate it first? Impeaching the leader of the highest court in the land is not justified and will further cause division in our country. Inquire, prove and conclude. Isn't that the basic process of investigation that we learned in elementary science, and not the other way around?—**Cedric, 22, PT graduate**

So who's next? Politics is the most pathetic form of entertainment. Just leave Davide alone.— **Ayee Flores, 23**

Pikon si Danding. Dirty politics is bad. *Kawawa naman ang* Pilipinas.—**Jugs, 24**

If he gets impeached, then it's high time we all migrate. Call me a quitter, I don't care. If the Supreme Court can't be spared, then what's my guarantee that my right as an individual will still be respected? We only have a few good men left, and Davide is one of those few. I hope he is not overcome by a bunch of losers in Congress.—**Jules**

I believe that Davide's impeachment is baseless and unconstitutional. Shame on the NPC congressmen for making a mountain out of a molehill.— **Mico Cruz, 18**

It's politically motivated, but Davide should undergo trial. I think he's innocent.—**Happy, 27**

Issues like this remind you of how depressing our country's situation is.—**Christa, 15**

I'm against it. Because it's very unfair for Chief Justice Davide. Why are they focusing only on him when these congressmen know that the money taken out from the JDF is deliberated and approved en banc (that means by all the justices in the Supreme Court)? I'd like to tell these congressmen that Filipinos aren't idiots to believe their stories. Why don't they check their pork barrel first and see if this really goes to the people and not to their pockets? *Bago niyo tingnan ang dumi ng ibang tao, tingnan niyo muna ang mga sarili niyo!* —**Chokies, 24**

Obviously, it's politically motivated. There are many alternative courses of action available for Congress other than impeachment, which is too harsh in my opinion considering the COA audit didn't find any anomalies. There's hardly any statemanship left in our country's legislators.—**Christian**

Davide rules! He's going to be laughing in the faces of these idiotic congressmen.—**Shasha, 19**

I'm pro-Davide. One, impeachment against him is clearly unconstitutional. Two, solons against him are mostly from one political party which wants Davide out for political reasons.—**Lhen, 23**

Clearly, this is a conspiracy. Anyone who can't see that is blind.—**Stewie, 17**

It should be withdrawn because it is politically motivated. COA already did its job and saw nothing wrong. Do congressmen think they can do a better job than COA? Are they willing to let the COA audit the disbursement of their pork barrel funds? I think those funds need more scrutiny than the JDF!—**Chino, 23, journalist**

I'd vote for getting on with the trial. Just so we'd know the real truth, whether he's guilty or just being framed.—**Shuni, 20**

Talk about people in glass houses casting stones. I'm willing to bet that if the tables are turned and these congressmen are the ones investigated, they'd be so terrified they'd urinate in their pants. —**AB, 22**

It's a start of another trend. We're done with three people power movements and failed coup attempts. Now we're about to start impeaching whoever we want to.—**Hazel**

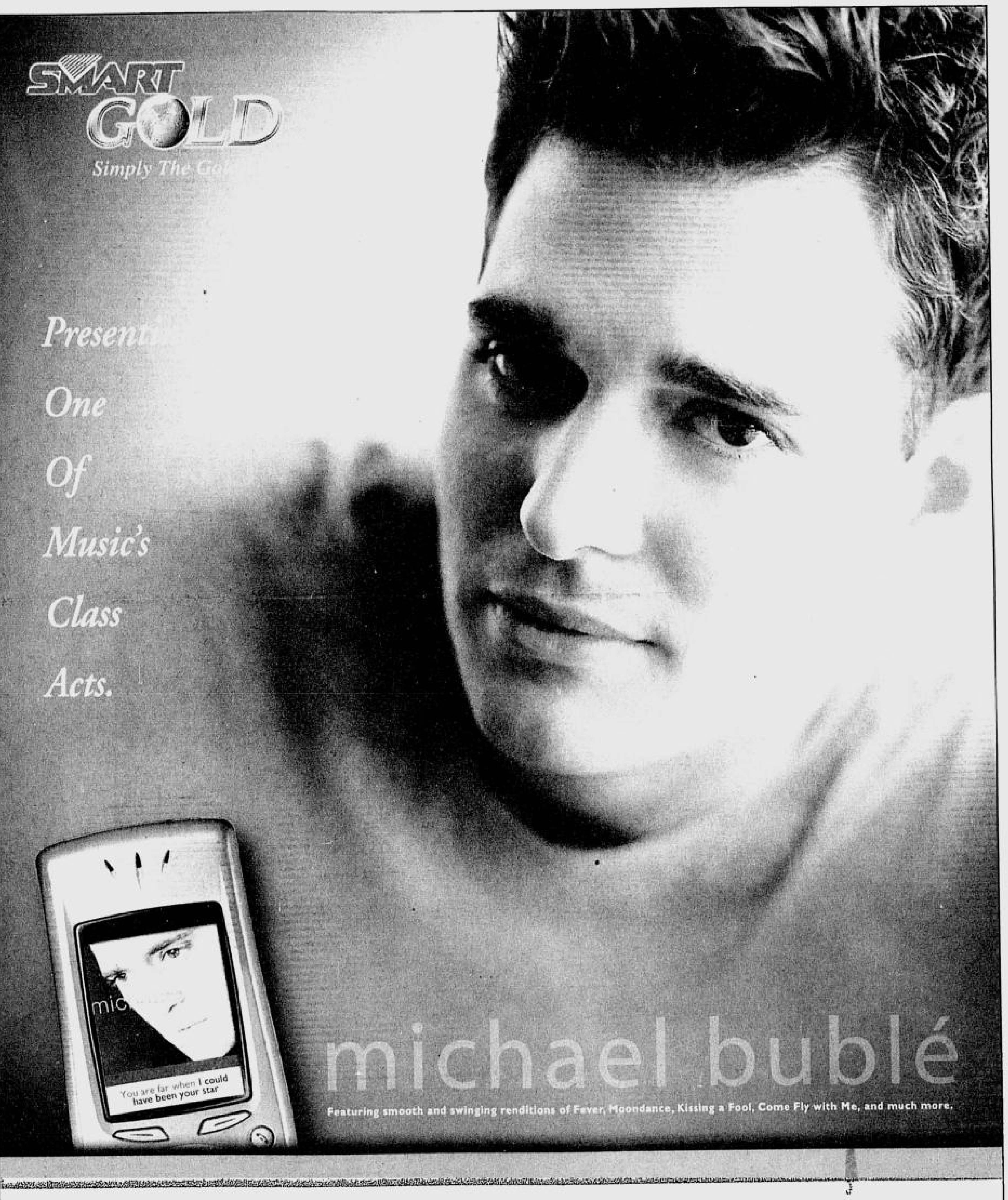
The impeachment of Hilario Davide is just a political gimmick of a group of supposedly educated people, who only crave for personal power and glory. Let justice and truth prevail for the second time. If we value democracy, let's support Davide. The accusation is completely baseless and unconstitutional.—**Pat D. Padilla, 18, college student**

It's politically motivated. They either found holes or planted things in Davide's character.— **Paul, 22**

I sympathize with the Chief Justice. It's obviously just a repeat of what's always been the star of Philippine politics—atrocious politicking itself. On the other hand, perhaps the Chief Justice should be man enough to face the allegations through the constitutional process of impeachment.—**Maureen Tañedo, 18**

The fact that a young imp named Wimp and his corrupt minions are trying to destroy the last stronghold of our democracy makes me want to vomit stale beer on all their faces. I'm behind Davide all the way.—**Tals Diaz, twentysomething**

It's obvious that Davide's impeachment is all about money—greedy politicians and businessmen protecting their own interests and not of the country.—**Mark**



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A BANSHEE'S cry signals a death in the family.

Monsters, Incorporated

By Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

LAST year, 2bU! walked you through Philippine folklore's most famous ghosts and goblins. This year, say hi to other well known ghosts from around the world.

How's this for a way to predict your death? The Irish believe that when banshees wail, a member of the family will die.

The word "banshee" comes from "ban," which means woman, and "shee," which translates to fairy.

Don't think they're all pretty little Tinkerbells, though. The fairies are often dressed in rags, and they cry softly and tenderly when a loved one from the family is to die, but scream like fiendish ghosts when they hate the family.

And if you're really lucky, you'll get a coach-a-bower, a huge black coach with a mounted coffin that's driven by a Dullahan, a headless horseman, knocking at your door and drenching you with blood. How sweet.

East-Slavic folklore has its own version of a banshee. The Rusalkas are water nymphs who lure men into rivers and lakes to drown them.

They appear to be beautiful young women who dance in meadows and open spaces under the new moon. Their shrill laughter is fatal.

Rusalkas are actually women who have died violent deaths. A Rusalka can be unmade when one avenges her death.

Maniacal demons

Brush up on your demon statistics. When last counted, incubi (that's an incubus to you—male demons who creep up on sleeping women and rape them) outnumbered succubi (that's the female counterpart of incubi) by nine to one. Half-human offsprings of these unholy unions are called a Cambion (no, not Rosemary's Baby).

New Jersey Pineland residents, on the other hand, believe that a creature called the New Jersey Devil, which apparently has been spotted by 2,000 people, is the reason why some factories and schools have closed down.

Now, think of this before pulling a Hamlet. Some Europeans believe in screaming skulls, which are skulls that, um, scream.

According to legend, they generally have been done wrong and just want their body back. One story is that of Bettiscombe Manor's servant, an African slave whose skull is still kept in a cardboard box in a bureau drawer.

NO Brandon Boyd here. The incubus rapes you in your sleep.

The servant asked to be buried in Africa or else a curse would fall on the England manor, and after his master neglected to fulfill his wish, the skull has kept on screaming his head off (pun not intended).

Now this guy isn't so scary. According to Scottish legend, kind spirits, which are called Brownies, may haunt old houses during the daytime, but do the housework at night, when everyone's asleep. Kind of makes you wonder if the tale about the elves and the shoemaker was based on a real story...

And you thought werewolves were hard to kill. Although people from the Czech Republic believe they were Swedish officers of the Protestant Army (who at that time were difficult to assassinate), Fexts are men who are vulnerable only to a bullet made of glass or a small stake that is used to tie young trees.

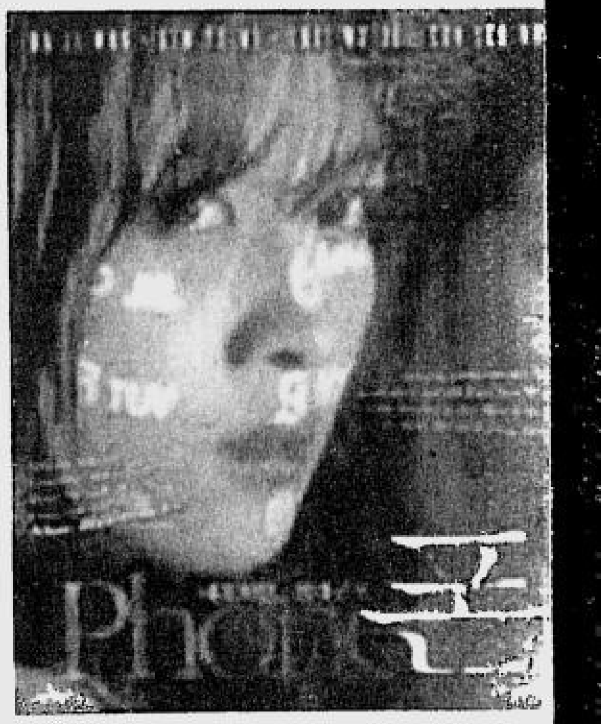
It is believed that Fexts
made if a child carries his m
centa under his left shoulder.

Hardworking elves

Scandinavians, for their
Gardsvords—little men wh
from dreams or the mere be
ist. The purpose of these
one's home, and only asks f
ridge on Julekveld or Chris
met, the gardsvord leaves.

Russians believe in Igosha
babies who just decide to
These spirits are believed to b
dren. You can, however, com
by giving it bread or clothing

We aren't the
only ones wary
of 'aswang' an
'manananggal'
other cultures
have their own
share of ghoul



Is your mobile phone safe?

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

IF "The Ring" made us stay away from wells a
oval-shaped wall mirrors, "The Phone" aspires
make us look warily at our cell phones, maybe ev
give them up.

The guys behind the subliminal campaign m
have some hope of success in other countries but n
here in the Philippines. Still, as a thriller, it is wor
watching.

The movie starts with a strange death, then intr
duces us to Ji Won, a writer who did a recent report
a sex scandal. Hounded by someone involved in t
scandal, Ji accepts her brother-in-law's invitation
live in their huge house, which the family decides to v
cate.

All alone in the big house, Ji sees and experienc
strange things. Hair flows from the faucet. She h
nightmares. Her laptop acts weirdly, flashing t
number 6644. One day, her niece Young Ju (who w
conceived using her eggs) answers her mobile pho
and, after screaming hysterically for a good f
minute, begins to utter obscenities, talk to dolls a
the air and passionately kisses her daddy on the lip

'The Phone' may have little
chance of parting a Pinoy
from his cell phone, but it sti
succeeds as a thriller

Enter Jin Hee. A young, immature, pretty hig
school student who meets a married man and fa
for him.

When the affair hits rough patches, she deludes h
self into thinking that their love will endure. Before s
can confirm it, though, she dies a horrible death. La
on, her troubled soul makes its presence known to
who will put the pieces of the puzzle together.

Full of suspenseful moments, thanks to great ed
ing and sounds, "The Phone" also has a great story
tell about undying love, betrayal, unrequited lo
selfishness and revenge. Like "The Eye" and "Inn
Senses," this Asian movie offers equal doses of
mance and suspense, and actually succeeds in bo
Featuring pretty actors, the movie is riveting ev
during ordinary scenes.

Yet another great addition to the list of Asian s
pense/horror flicks, "The Phone" should give lo
movie people, whose idea of a suspense film is to u
a lot of prosthetics, some new possibilities.

E-mail the author at katotino@yahoo.com

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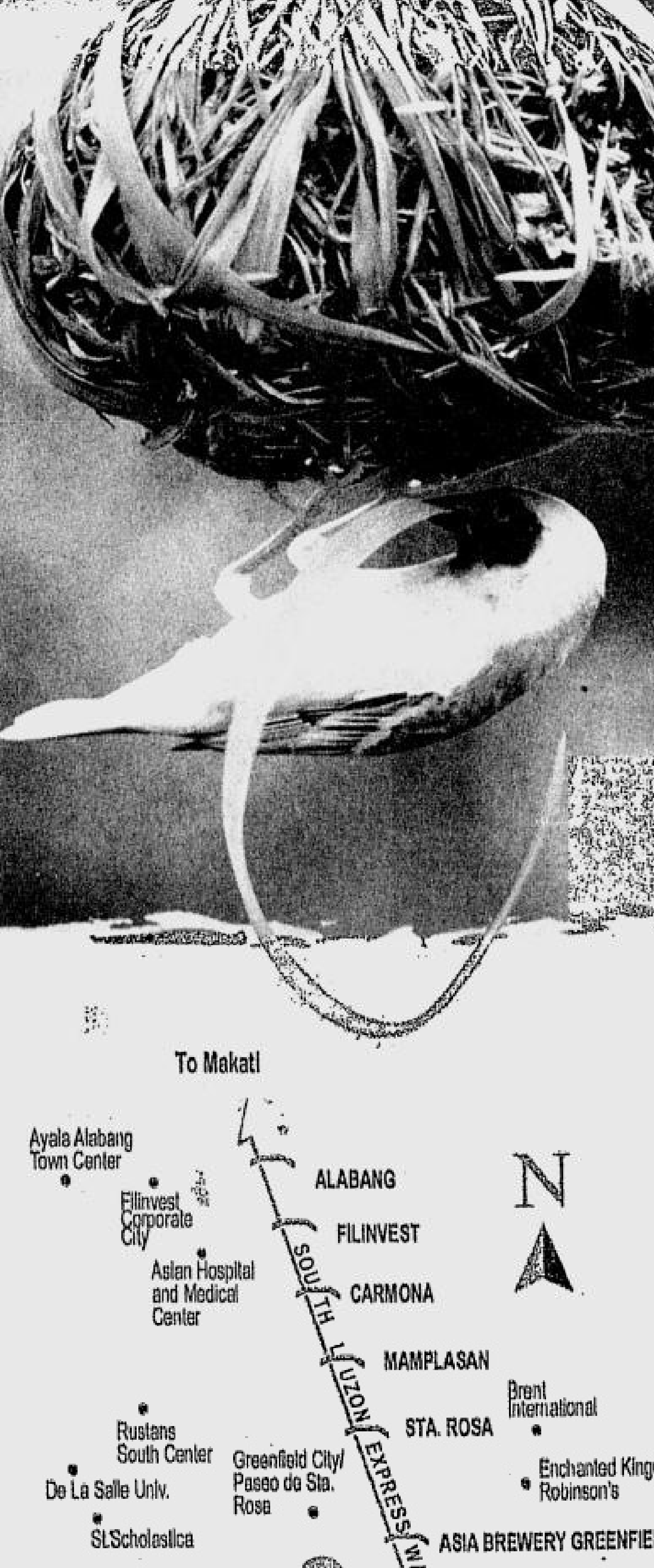

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Similar to Ireland's banshees are the itchetikies, believed to be children who were drowned by their mothers and live in bodies of water. Legend has it that when you slap the water and hear a distant cry, something bad will happen to you.

Slavic folklore tells a similar tale through Vodniks, which are water demons that come about whenever a child is drowned. The demon appears as a fish or a human with green hair, and when a person touches it, the person is grabbed underwater until he suffocates and dies.

Talk about water poltergeists—Scotland's Kelpies are water devils who lure travelers on their backs and run them into the water. The rider seldom drowns, but hey, what do you do with wet clothes?

Klude, a water spirit which takes the shape of a big, hairy dog, likes to follow Belgian travelers at night.

Kludes walk on their hind legs, and can also take the shape of a big black cat or a scary bird. One thing's for sure, you can't outrun this creature. The faster you walk, the faster it walks, and you wouldn't want to see him run.

Night hags

We're not the only ones wary of the *aswang* and *mananggal*. Slovakians believe that Nocnictas, their version of baby-eating night hags, exist.

To protect their children, mothers place a knife in the cradle or draws a circle around it with a knife. Either that, or they place a doll or axe underneath the cradle.

Now here's a hard worker. According to Hungarian folklore, a Lideric Demon is somewhat like an incubus, and hatches from the first egg of a black hen placed under the armpit (don't look at us).

What sets him apart from incubi and succubi is that he's more than just a nymph—he actually likes being given work. He can get troublesome if no work is given to him. He can assume the form of a human being or a chicken, but he always has a goose's foot. If you'd like to get rid of a Lideric, send it off on impossible jobs until it gives up or dies of madness.

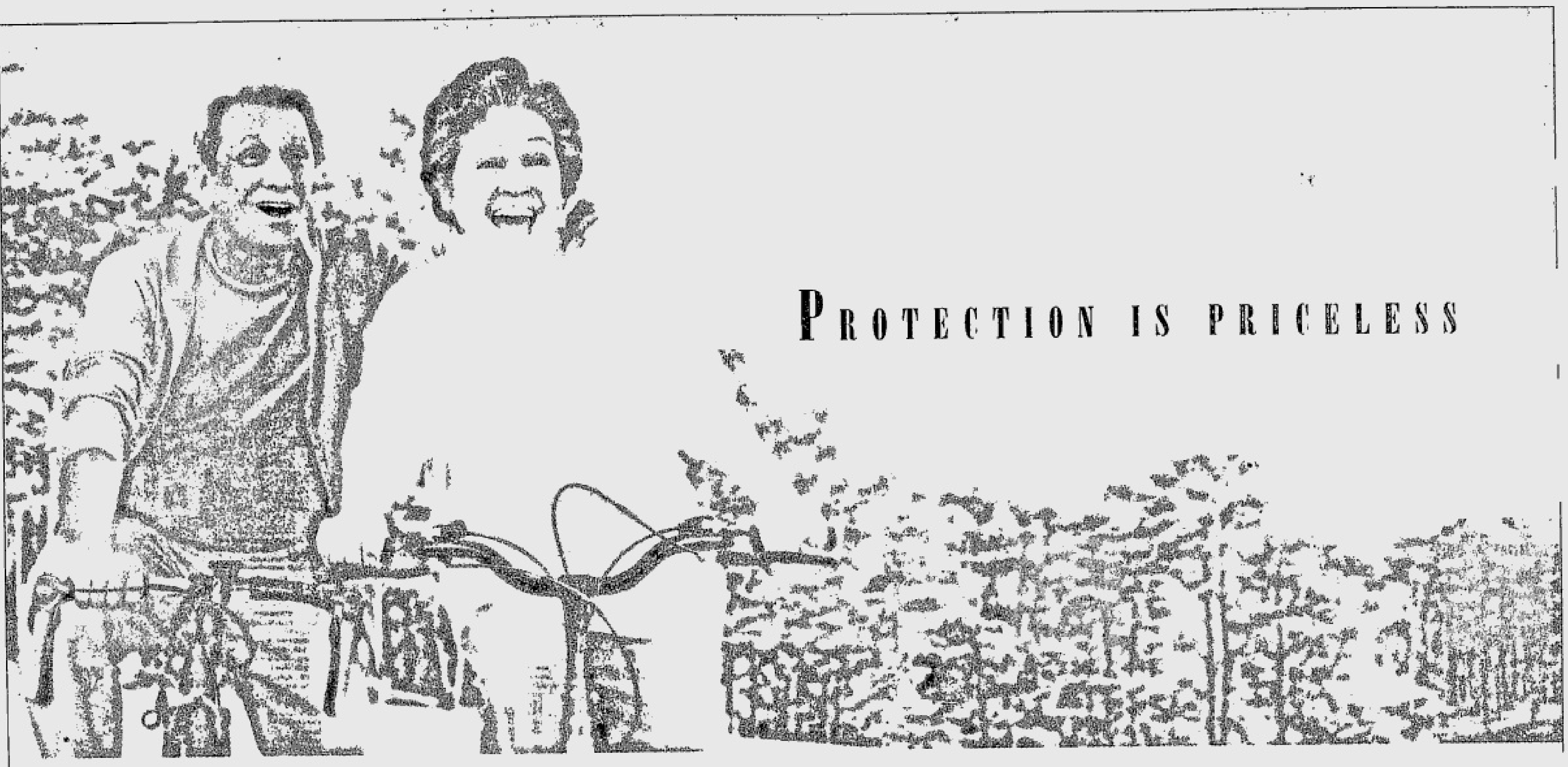
When travelers in the forests of Malaysia and Indonesia disappear, don't be surprised if locals blame it on Manticores.

A Manticore is a lion with a man's head, with three rows of razor-sharp teeth and a ball at the end of its tail that's filled with darts for ammo.

When a person is spotted by this creature, he is killed and devoured, clothes and all. Even his belongings are not spared.

When swimming, beware of Peg Powlers. These are women with green skin, long hair and sharp teeth who lurk near river trees and grab the ankles of swimmers until they drown.

And the next time you're up in the Alps, keep a look out for Tatzlwurms. Also known as a tunnel worm, these critters grow from two to three feet long, and is so poisonous even its breath can kill a human.



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True-to-life flatliner

By Catherine Young
2bU! Correspondent

JESSICA Fernando may seem like any 18-year-old college freshman, dreading the final examinations but excited by the activities of her student organizations.

But young as she is, she has already had a close brush with death. Maria Ramona Linda Fernando (nicknamed Jessica because father Jessie wanted her to have his first name as well) was diagnosed last May with Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS).

Fernando said it took doctors some time to figure out the problem. Initially, they said she had diffused toxic goiter. Then an endocrinologist said hyperthyroidism. A chest x-ray revealed a mass "as big as a *santol*."

From December to February, the Ateneo de Manila University student weighed only 95 pounds, which increased to 127 pounds in March. Despite the dramatic change, her endocrinologist (an expert in the endocrine glands and hormones) was not alarmed. More tests revealed that Fernando's hormone levels were irregular due to a malfunctioning pituitary gland.

Then in May, things went really wrong. "I had difficulty breathing. I thought something was stuck in my throat," she said. Her coughing produced a reddish fluid, which wasn't blood. She couldn't sleep, not even lie down because she would feel like she was drowning. Brought to the emergency room of the Philippine Heart Center, doctors inserted a tube in her throat to supply oxygen but the fluid in her lungs would not let air in.

Sedated, Fernando struggled for every lungful of oxygen the whole night.

Transferred to the Quezon City General Hospital, a specialist in eyes, ears, nose and throat found that nothing was blocking her respiratory system.

She was brought next to the Cardinal Santos hospital for a series of heart tests. A doctor watched over her as physicians concluded she already had "one foot in the grave."

JESSICA during her battle with Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome

Time of SARS

At the time, there was fear everywhere of the deadly Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome SARS). At first, doctors thought she might have the disease, but further tests would reveal ARDS, which was not that far removed from SARS. (A person with SARS automatically has ARDS, but not vice versa.) But the doctors could not establish if her sickness was viral, bacterial, or both.

Her illness resulted in pneumonia, and more tests revealed a block caused by potassium ions, resulting in abdominal pain. Food was given to her through tubes and doctors administered antibiotics through the veins in her feet. For one whole night and the next day, she was not allowed to drink because she had to use a respirator.

One of her physicians told her family she needed to undergo a procedure using a machine available only in the United States. Her attending physicians could only try to make her comfortable. With her immune system so weak, everyone around her had to wear masks. The sedatives did not help her sleep.

On a Saturday morning, her vital signs dropped twice, registering as flatlines in monitors. She did not see any bright lights or hear strange voices. It just seemed like a nap.

When she woke up, her mom, Debbie, asked, "Jessica, did you know that you were gone?" The song "When You Believe" was playing in the background, and Fernando started to cry.

She would wake up again to the song "Magnificat" and she asked for her friends from Hangad and Bukas Palad, two singing groups; Sibol, a theater group; relatives, teachers and schoolmates. "It was like People Power in the ICU (intensive care unit)," Fernando laughed. "Hangad was singing outside. They were all praying and had flowers and balloons."

Mother's Day gift

The day after her near-death experience was Mother's Day. Fernando was upset she didn't have anything for her mom. In her journal, Fernando's mom wrote, "She grasped my hand tightly and, with tears in her eyes, she told me how sad she was that this special day found us in the ICU; and that she didn't even have a gift for me. I told her that the best Mother's Day gift ever was that my Jessica was alive."

Fernando wanted to quit high school and not go on to college. "When you have hyperthyroidism, all problems are magnified, so I got depressed easily... I didn't see a reason to live, any purpose.

"Then all these people came, even people I didn't know, they prayed for me and wrote me letters... [I realized that] 'Wow, *ang dami palang nagmamahal sa akin,* and I wanted to just throw all that away?'"

"The doctors were amazed not at the gravity of my sickness but at the speed of my recovery." Her right lung, which collapsed from pneumonia, recovered.

Fernando is grateful to her mother for seeing her through the crisis. The mother wrote, "I'd tell myself, a mother must be strong. I must not weep, lest my child despairs. So one day I said, 'Fear not, Jessica, if Mommy cries; for each and every tear that falls upon my cheeks means I love you.'"

During her recovery period, Fernando's doctors had to operate to remove a tube in her arm that went all the way to her heart. Afterwards, her chest tightened and she could not breathe again. Her mother berated the chief surgeon of the hospital.

For a brief moment, Fernando's life was again, hanging by a thread.

Eventually, the *santol*-sized mass significantly decreased and required no biopsy. Most of the P700,000 hospital bills were paid through donations. Her family only spent P100,000.

Her friends even gave her a surprise debut, holding a mini-concert in June like she dreamed of before she got sick.

Love and prayer

Fernando credits her survival to "the realization that there are so many people who love me and [that] I should also learn to love my self..."

Prayer helped, too. Every night, after the flatlines, mother and daughter would pray the Healing Prayer together. Friends and strangers, whom her mom called her "prayer warriors," also prayed.

"God has worked through me; through the people who came, sang and prayed for me; through my doctors..."

Taking up Bachelor of Science in Communications Technology Management, Fernando is doing well, although still on medication and has regular check-ups. She has performed on stage and sings with the all-girl band CRRAMM (a name taken from the initials of the members). She gave recently an inspirational talk in her high school, Miriam.

"People tell me I still have a mission for God. But... for now, I [just] want to be a better person—the philosophy of Magis—because this is a second chance, and I shouldn't waste it."

E-mail the author at cathy_young1@yahoo.com

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BRITTANY Murphy plays nanny to Dakota Fanning in this uneven, messy movie.

'UPTOWN GIRLS'

Confused film, confused audience

Save for the adorable Dakota Fanning, everything in this film is a disappointment

By Katrina Anne Yap
2bU! Correspondent

REVIEW

WATCHING Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures' "Uptown Girls" is a real confusion stimulator.

You enter the theater feeling you're in for a treat because: 1. It stars the very cute and talented Dakota Fanning (of Steven Spielberg's "Taken"); 2. You expect Brittany Murphy to prove she can carry more serious roles after "8 Mile"; and 3. The director of the movie is Boaz Yakin of "Remember the Titans."

Unfortunately, save for Dakota Fanning, everything else turns out to be a disappointment.

Murphy is the rich and well-loved Molly, only daughter of the late rock legend Tommy Gunn who was killed in an accident with her mother. She's having the time of her life, until she turns 22 and her accountant embezzles her inheritance. Suddenly, Molly has to face life's realities and look for a job.

Fortunately, Molly's friends help her out. Girlfriend Ingrid (Marley Shelton) allows her to stay at her place. She also helps Molly cleanse her inner being through garage sales and yoga. And ever-dependable friend Huey (Donald Faison) gets her a job as a nanny to 8-year-old Ray Schleine (Fanning).

Ray is a bossy, snooty, precocious perfectionist of a kid whose music executive mother Roma (Heather Locklear) is a distant parent. Because of Ray's attitude, nannies come and go, and she never establishes close relations with anyone.

It's only Molly who learns to tolerate her, because she desperately needs the money to shoulder half of the rent, and she feels the same loneliness and hurt Ray is going through.

Needless to say, in time they find in each other a true friend.

The plot is interesting, but there are too many plot holes in the movie. For example, there's the part where Molly's electricity is cut off because she's not able to pay the bills.

Weirdly enough, she and her love interest, singer-guitarist Neal (Jesse Spencer), are able to survive without any utilities. And you see a working television set. Battery-operated, perhaps?

Moreover, Murphy delivers poorly in this film. You don't really know whether Molly is independent, strong and witty or immature, bratty, and just plain dumb.

Molly is so irritating you'd actually feel good about her misery. That she has a pig for a pet doesn't help either. The only time Molly earns our pity is when she decides to get her own apartment—a dilapidated one located in a red light district.

This character is so inconsistent that Murphy's poor delivery could be due to the shoddy scriptwriting in the first place.

Praise-worthy

On the other hand, Fanning gives a good performance despite her "too bad to be true" character. Although it will not live up to her performance in "I Am Sam," Dakota is still praise-worthy.

Memorable scenes include Ray talking to her comatose father and her emotional trips to Coney Island. Don't miss the witty remarks ("Act your age, not your shoe size," "Why don't you just drink cyanide? At least it's quick.") and Fanning giving the finger.

To the film's credit, "Uptown Girls" is able to discuss serious issues like death without transforming the film into a crying fest. There are a lot of funny moments in the film, including Molly's hilarious attempt at suicide, and Neal's 1980's-inspired video "Sheets of Egyptian Cotton."

Not to be missed either are the cameo appearances by famous celebrities and the silly pseudo-rock ballet ending. And though the ending is abrupt, just as the first five minutes of the film is dragging, the movie's emotional complexity is interesting enough.

The verdict? Watch this on video with your little sister for a bonding experience. But if you're planning to catch this movie wherever it's still showing, better just save your money for "The Matrix Revolutions," which has its worldwide opening tonight.

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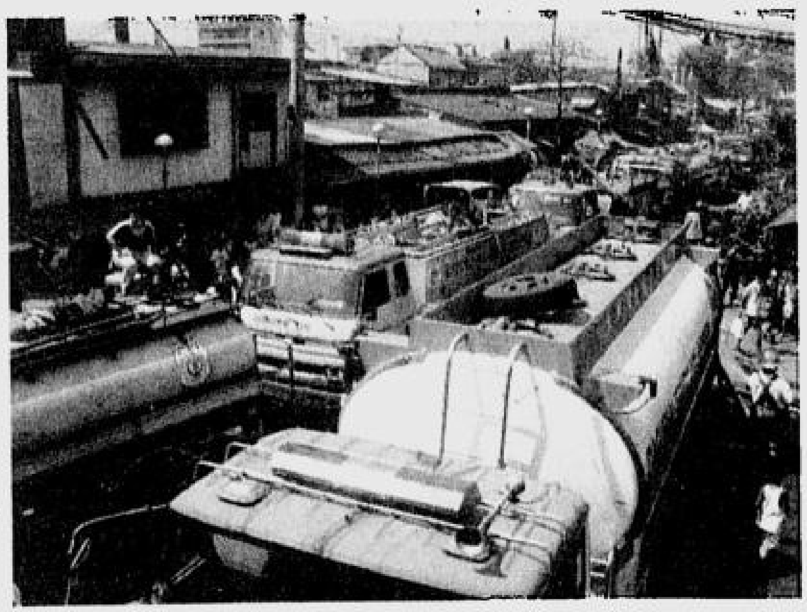
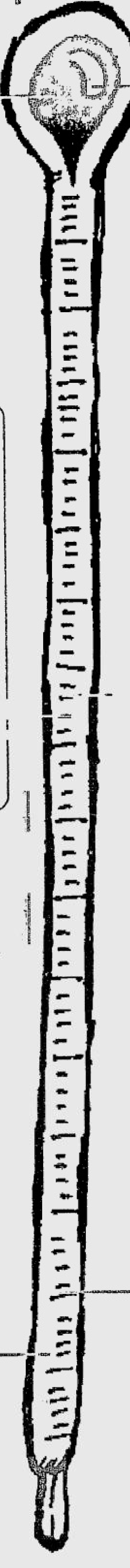
Bratty, impeachment-crazy pols aside, we're still here!

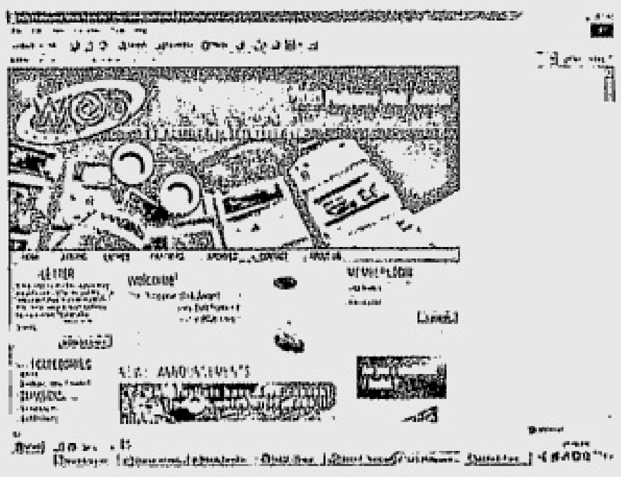


SPEEDY RESPONSE. Over 20 fire trucks arrived at a site in Sta. Cruz, Manila just minutes after a fire started in an apartment. Thanks to the quick action of these firemen—most of whom were volunteers—the fire was put out before it spread to other houses. Among the engines seen at the site were Jose Abad Santos, Chinese volunteers, Divisoria and Dagupan. Kudos.



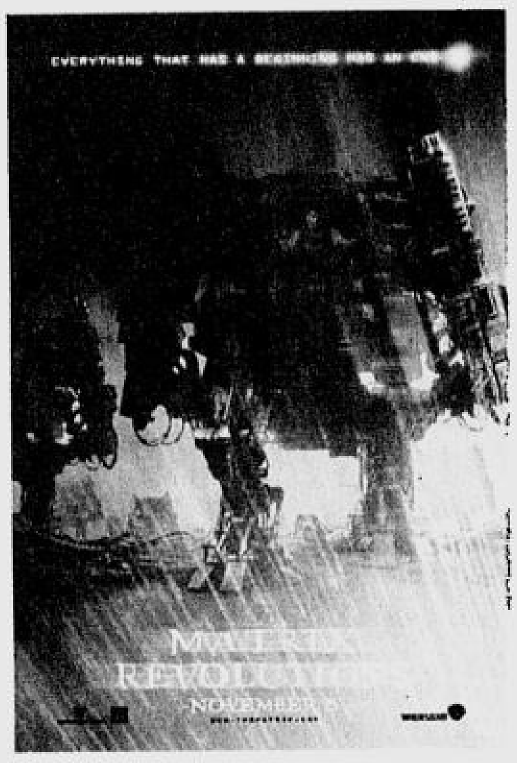
MTV AIDS SUMMIT. MTV will be relaying a very important message to the youth on Nov. 21 at The Fort's grounds. The impact of this AIDS awareness campaign will be made stronger by the appearances of celebrities and young artists including Mandy Moore, Parokya ni Edgar, Cheese, Moonstar 88, Kapatid, Kamikazee, Mongols, etc. We love the slogan, "Spread the message, not the virus." You better be there to listen.

MANDY Moore, Mariah Carey, Jerry Yan, Vic Zhou—all these artists will soon be in Manila. And if our sources are right, this is just the beginning. And that's good news. Aside from the chance to see these celebrities perform live, this is a good way to tell the world that, hey, we're still standing, terrorists, impeachment, corrupt lawmakers and all.



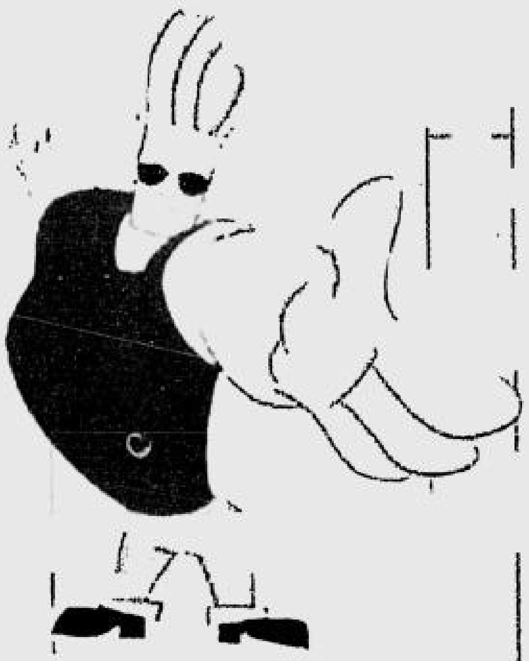
WEBBY AWARDS. Who will bag the top awards at tomorrow's Philippine Web Awards? We're as clueless as you are. Visit their site www.philippinewebawards.com for clues.

YOU can make a difference. Registration for voters has been extended up to Nov. 9. If you still haven't registered, get off your couch and visit your municipal hall. For complete details, visit www.comelec.gov.ph.


EVERYTHING THAT HAS A BEGINNING HAS AN END
MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
NOVEMBER 5

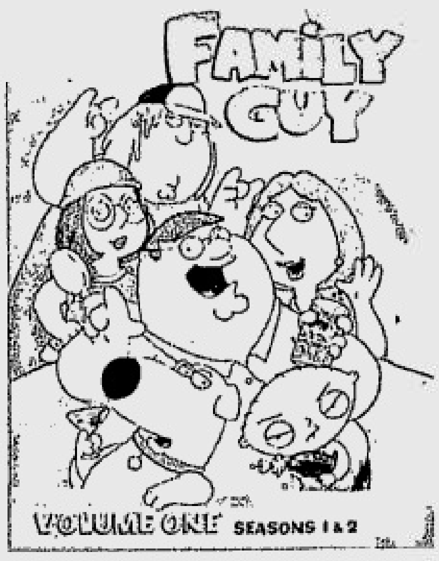
ARE you ready for the next installment? The world premiere of the next Matrix movie, "Matrix Revolutions," will be tonight at 10 p.m. Get your tickets now! You wouldn't want to be left behind, would you?

HEY, pretty mama, are you ready for this? Rumors are flying around about a Johnny Bravo movie. The supposed lead star? The Rock. Erm, that doesn't sound right. Excuse us while we hurl.

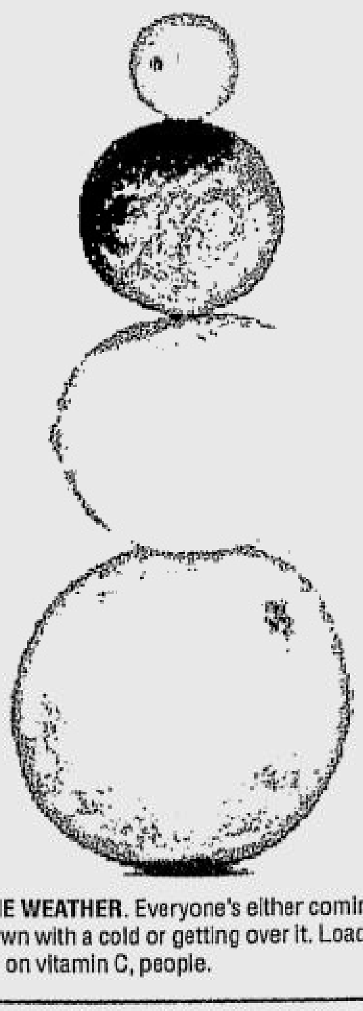


THE STORY of confessional poet Sylvia Plath who chose to end her life at the age of 30 by drinking sleeping pills and putting her head inside her oven has been turned into a movie. While the filmmakers have promised that their treatment of the story would be "sensitive," they still earned the ire of Sylvia Plath's daughter, poet/painter Frieda Hughes, who banned them from using her mother's poetry in the film and wrote a poem to express her anger. "They think I should give them my mother's words/To fill the mouth of their monster/Their Sylvia Suicide Doll," she wrote. Gwyneth Paltrow stars in the film.

SETH MACFARLANE, who used to write for "Dexter's Laboratory," "Cow and Chicken" and "Johnny Bravo," created his own cartoon series about a dysfunctional but hilarious family. The more interesting characters are Brian, their talking dog and Stewie, the year-old baby with an incredible vocabulary and an obsessive plan to dominate the world. "Family Guy" entertained people in the United States for three seasons until it was cancelled by Fox. Now the DVD box sets have been selling like crazy, there's a petition signed by over a hundred thousand people begging the network to bring the show back and there are rumors of a movie, too. Will we be seeing more adventures with Peter and his family soon? We just have to wait. Until then, we've got the DVDs to keep us happy.



CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES. Wildfires in five counties have killed a number of people, burned over 800,000 acres of properties and caused over $2 billion in damages. If that's not bad enough, officials believe an arsonist was behind this tragedy. Makes you wonder what kind of human being would be capable of that.



THE WEATHER. Everyone's either coming down with a cold or getting over it. Load up on vitamin C, people.

SOME Pinoy lyricists are becoming bolder and bolder—and not in a good way. This is beyond risque; this is perverse and disturbing. What's this song about a guy listening to his girlfriend being raped on the phone? We don't want to know.

DAVIDE IMPEACHMENT. Read what the youth have to say about it on C1.

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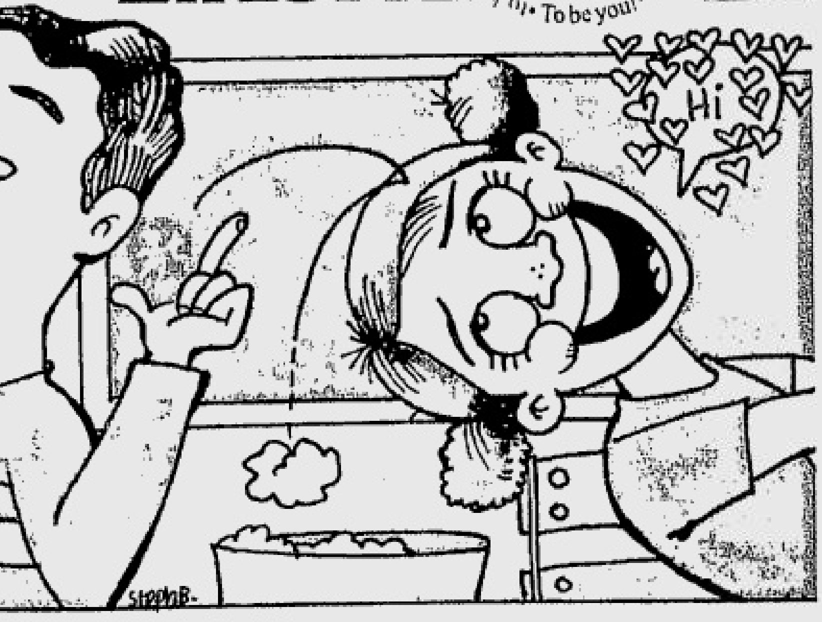


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

How to catch his attention

Niño Mark Sablan & September Mahino

I'M 18 years old and I have this problem, which I think many girls experience, too. There's this guy that I'm head-over-heels in love with. The problem is, he doesn't seem to notice me or know that I exist! What will I do?

PEPPER

What should you do? Well, nothing. Wouldn't it be more fulfilling if he notices you on his own without your having to make a fool of yourself or being seen as suffering from a really bad case of attention deprivation?

If my crush smiles at me or says "hey" without my making the first move, then that is the ultimate *kilig* moment. By trying too hard, the guy might just get turned off or simply laugh at you for being Princess Dork.

If you don't care about image or if your major goal is to simply attract his attention by hook, crook, book or, uhm, look, then all you've got to remember is to do it subtly. Ace every exam in class or impress your prof during recitation. Project unparalleled confidence as if you are an *artista* begging for privacy. Talk with his friends instead and leave him alone. Practice reverse psychology. Whatever.

Or you can do my favorite—live life as if he doesn't matter, as if there are so many fish in the sea and there are so many important things to do in life. Not only will you arouse his interest, you will also get to channel your powers into more life-changing endeavors.

MARK

Here is a very obvious answer: Approach him.

Take a risk and respond to your crush's social animal side. Believe me, every guy has one. Say hi to him, talk to him or, better yet, ask him a question about class. Soon you will find, maybe not that he has reciprocated your feelings or he has become your new friend, but that you have a better knowledge of who the dude is who has unknowingly wrought havoc in your life.

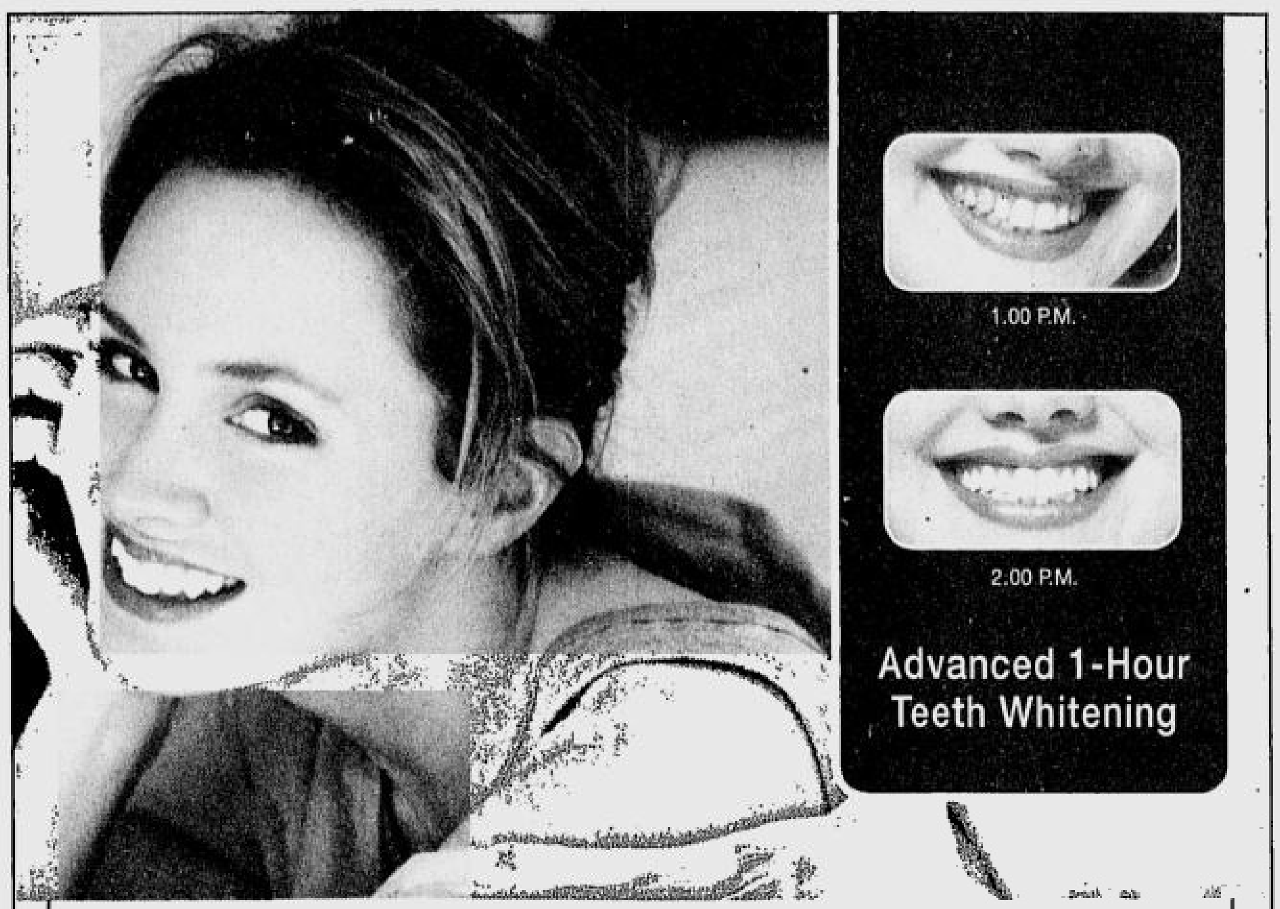
While it is exciting to drool over someone whose emotional distance fires your imagination, there comes a time when you have to think about what happens next. You can sit back and wait for him to notice and talk to you, if you have enough patience. Or you can take charge of the situation and discover if the guy is really worth your admiration.

Who cares if it would look as if you made the first move? If you care, speaking to a stranger is, technically, hardly a first move. It's standard operating procedure done by everyone wanting to ask for directions and information. Sure, your romantic intentions put a bit of color into this SOP, but hey, no one can blame you for that.

Take courage. He's just a guy.

SEPTEMBER

E-mail the writers at markandsep@yahoo.com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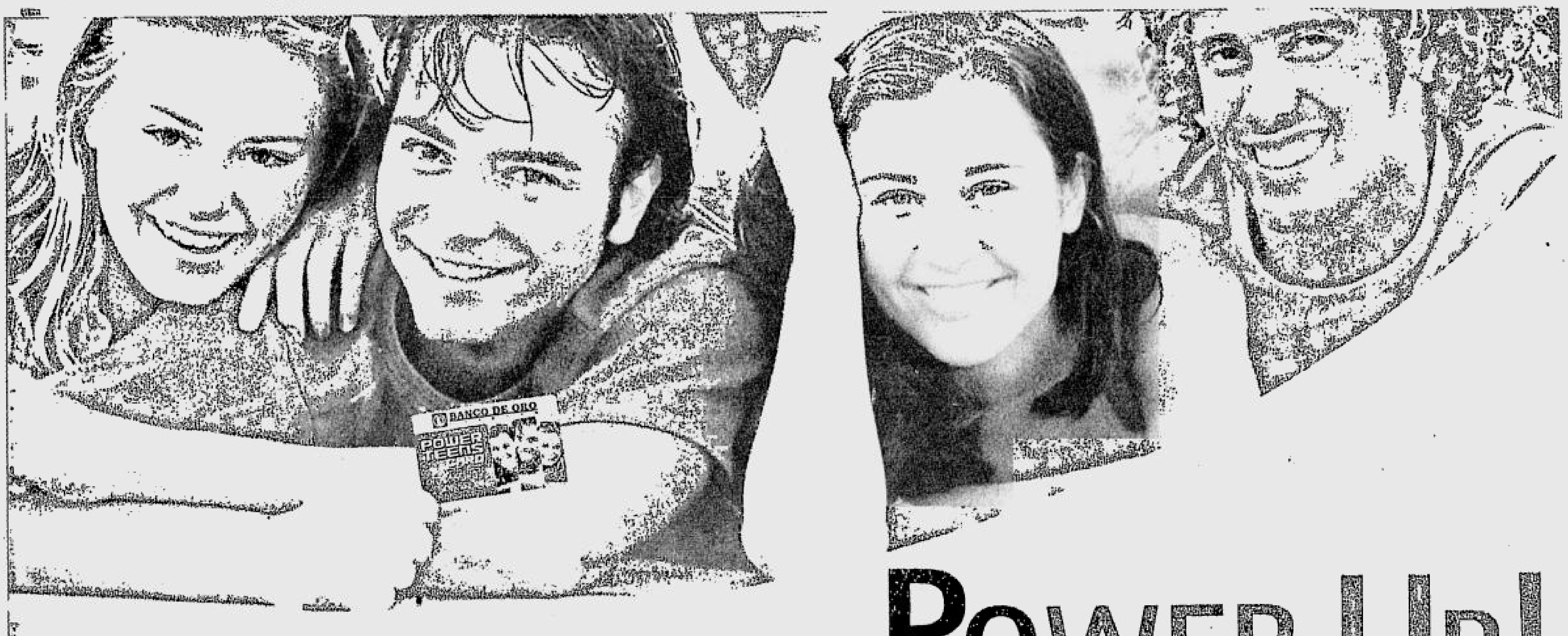

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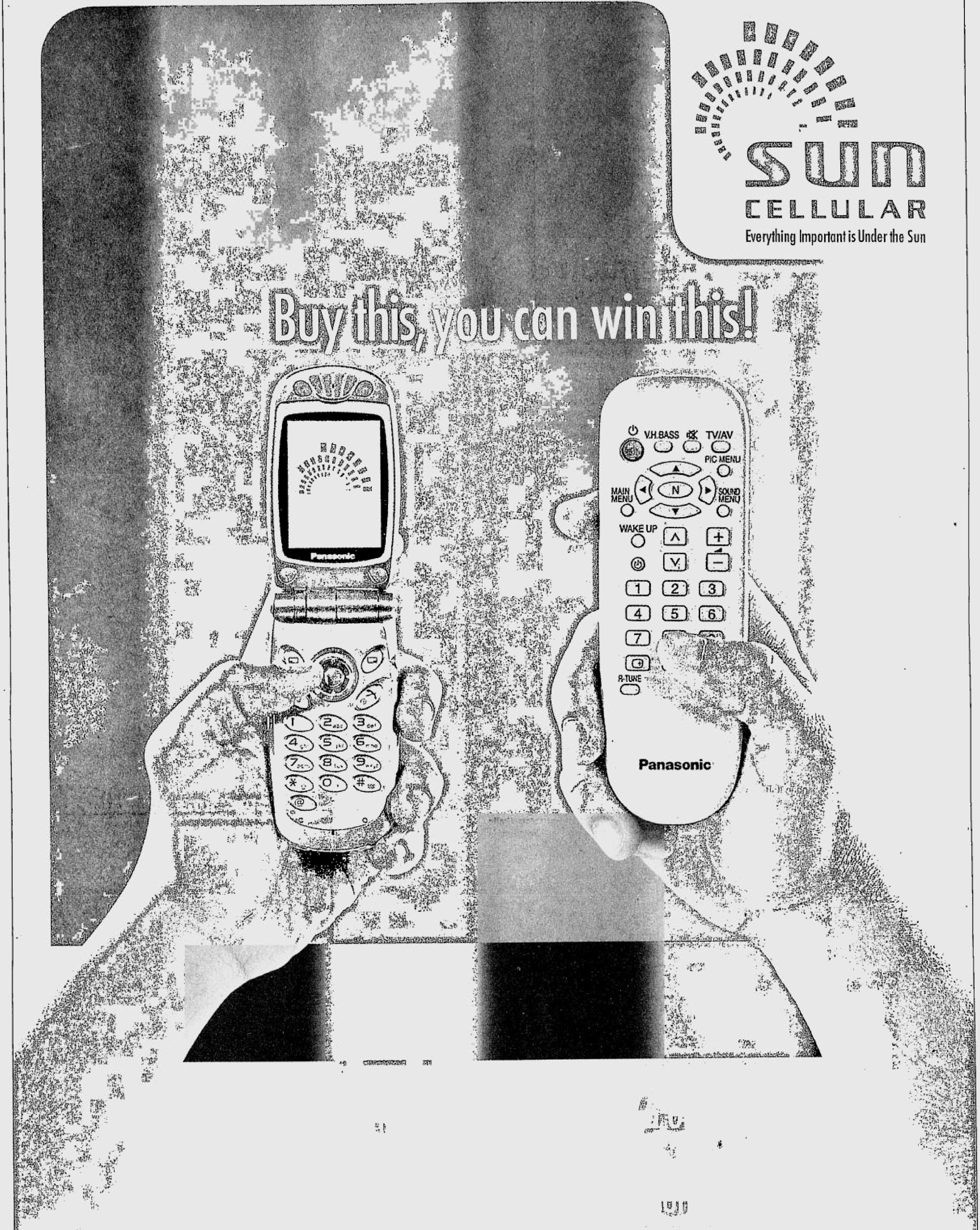

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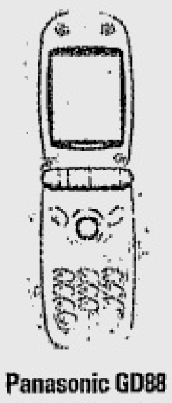

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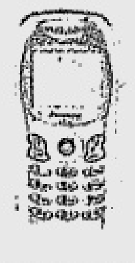

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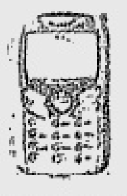

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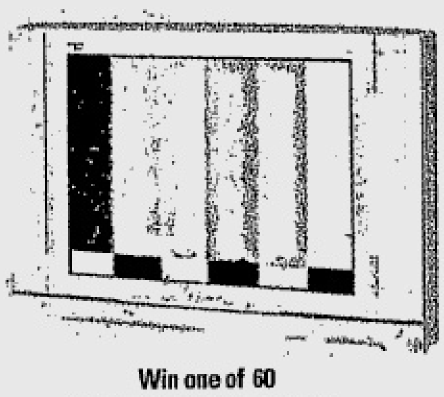

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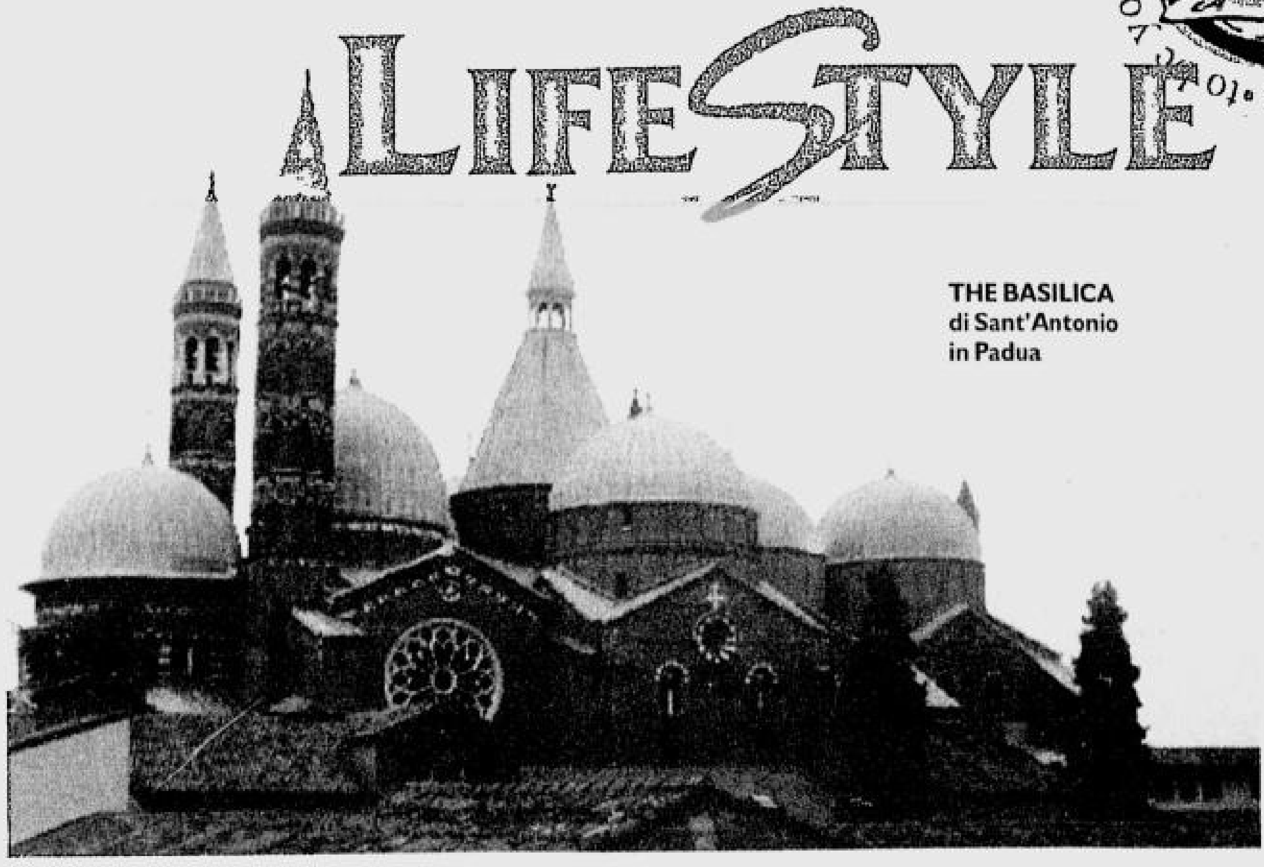

THE BASILICA di Sant'Antonio in Padua

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ROBINSONS Place LIPA

Viva Italia!

Text by Cheryl Tiu
2bU! Correspondent
Photos by Rhea Austria and Aimee Co

I WAS crying hysterically. Someone had stolen my bag and taken my precious digital camera, two cell phones and all the money I had in my wallet on the train, 30 minutes before it was set to depart from Budapest to Venice.

Add to that the indifference of Hungarians as I frantically searched for the police, spitting out the phrase, "Nem beszelek angolul" (I don't speak English) over and over again.

The seven friends from Ateneo whom I was traveling with—Aimee, Elga, Jess, Mattel, Myma, Rhea and Miko—were calling my parents and running out with me to look for the police.

The only good thing about the whole episode was they didn't take my passport. Much as I was distraught and shaken, I decided to remain on the train that was bound for Italy.

I prayed that after this 10-hour train ride, the next eight days we were going to spend in Italy (from Oct. 11 to 18) would turn out to be much better than this horrible, horrible Friday.

Venice

My prayers were answered! As soon the train stopped at Venice, we immediately ran out of the station to admire the beautiful city right before us. We gushed as we saw gondoliers paddling in the canals and the beautiful houses "swimming" in the waters.

Since Venice was full at this time of year, we booked a hotel in Padua. We took the 30-minute train ride to Padua to dump our stuff at the hotel, and then we took the train back to Venice.

The highlight of the day was riding a gondola across the Grand Canal—the eight of us split into two gondolas—and our gondoliers singing to us! We kept gushing like giddy tourists and taking turns with the gondolier's hat in front of the camera.

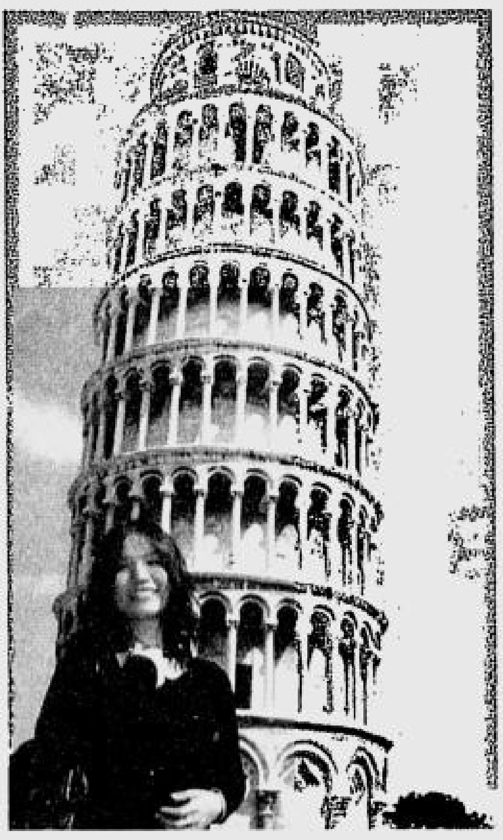
Padua

Mattel and Elga wanted to spend another day in Venice. The rest of us were scheduled to go to Verona, but since there was a train strike, we just decided to stay and explore Padua, especially since it wasn't the most obvious tourist spot like the others, but a timid university town.

We went to mass at the famous Basilica di Sant'Antonio, which houses the remains of St. Anthony of Padua, grabbed lunch at Spizzico, a popular Italian fast food and walked through the Giardino Dell Arena, a lush garden frequented by university students.

At night, we dressed out and had coffee and sandwiches at the popular Caffè Pedrochi,

VIVA/E2



THE AUTHOR in front of The Leaning Tower of Pisa

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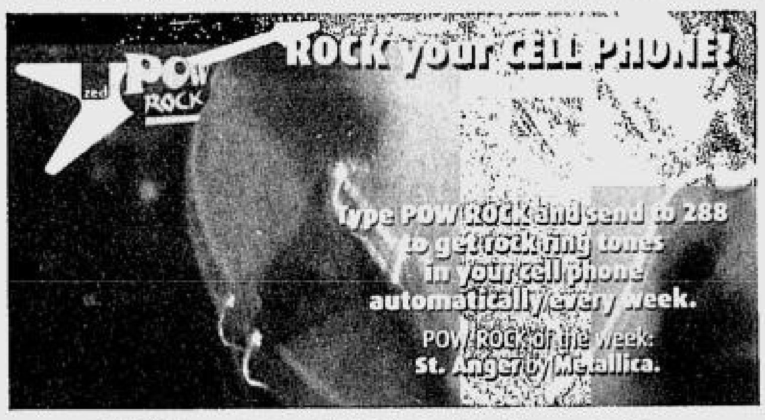

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9	Mr. Suave Ver. 2	*Parokya Ni Edgar*	**TONE MRSUAVE2**
10	Can't Lose You	*F4*	**TONE CANTLOSE**
11	Tuwing Umuulan At Kapiling Ka	*Regine Velasquez*	**TONE UMUULAN**
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14	Banal Na Aso	*Yano*	**TONE BANAL**
15	Build Me Up, Buttercup	*Sound Alike*	**TONE BUTTERCUP**
16	Thoia Thoing	*R. Kelly*	**TONE THOIA**
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18	If You're Not The One	*Daniel Bedingfield*	**TONE IFYOURNOT**
19	Perfect	*True Faith*	**TONE PERFECT**
20	I Will Love Again	*Lara Fabian*	**TONE LOVEAGN**
	In Love Ako Sa'Yo	*Nyoy Volante*	**TONE INLUVAKO**
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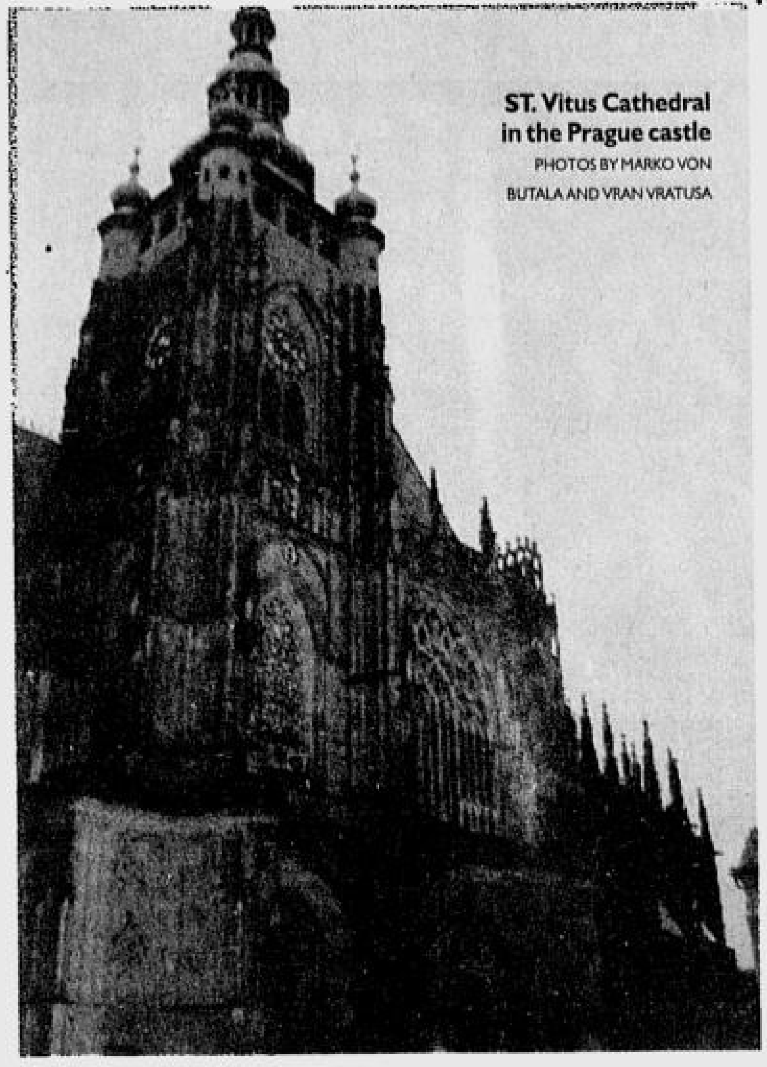

ST. Vitus Cathedral in the Prague castle

PHOTOS BY MARKO VON BUTALA AND VRAN VRATUSA

Prodigious in Prague

Old Europe comes up young and vital to eager Asians

WE left Budapest at 9 a.m. on Oct. 23, but because of the Hungarian holiday—Remembrance Day for the 1956 uprising when 30, 000 people were killed by Soviet troops—it took us almost four hours just to cross to the Austrian border because of the heavy traffic. But for the same reason, the border guards just let us through without even glancing at our passports!

The highlight of our drive came when we finally reached the Czech Republic border, and discovered Excalibur City—a duty-free shopping center set in medieval times, with dragon and wizard busts on its exterior (imagine an Enchanted Kingdom cum Duty-Free Philippines). We all bought chocolates.

We finally arrived in Prague at 6 p.m. It was 2° Celsius outside and I felt like I was going to freeze to death. The first thing we saw was the National Museum whose sight made us turn around on our seats in awe.

After we checked into our hostel in the New Town (Nové Mesto), we walked around Wenceslas Square—the pivot of Modern Prague, lined with trendy boutiques and fashion stores—and popped into McDonald's for a quick dinner. We were all really tired so we retired early.

The next morning, we girls checked into a private apartment on Parizská, Prague's most glamorous shopping street, in the Old Town. While the boys went to find a cheaper parking place for Marko's car, we walked to the Old Town Square (Staromestské Nám) just five minutes away. Almost all the streets in Prague are in cobblestone, and the Old Town literally adheres to its moniker, with horse-drawn carriages, Gothic-structured Týn Church, Art Nouveau monument of Jan Hus (the 15th century religious reformer) and of course—the Astronomical Clock. We got there in time to catch the hourly chime to 1 p.m., where a mechanical Death empties his hourglass and the apostles follow in a little procession.

We walked around the flea markets and toward the Vltava River, which divides the city into the hilly left bank consisting of the castle district of Hradèany and the Little Quarter (Malá Strana), and the more stretched out right bank which includes the Old and New Towns, and the Jewish Quarter (Josefov)).

Porn encounter

A group of guys asked us to take a picture for them and we got to know them. They were porn stars from Spain in town for an erotic exhibit! I thought they were joking but they showed me their cards, invited us to come to the event tonight (and I remembered 2bU!'s Jason Doplito telling me there were a lot of porn stars in the Czech Republic).

We said our goodbyes and walked over to the Charles Bridge to meet up with Marko (as Miko had gone shopping) who had scared me to death by slipping his hand up my jacket from behind, just when I had seen a suspicious-looking bald guy following us earlier. The bridge was lined with Baroque Catholic statues, souvenir vendors and street musicians. We crossed over to the other end of the bridge to Hradèany and went up the Prague Castle which provides a fantastic view of the city.

We went into the country's largest church, St. Vitus' Cathedral, and walked around the courtyards and the Royal Gardens. Marko went to Slovenia, Vran ,at the last minute, decided to drive down to Prague from Ljubljana. At 9:30 p.m., the five of us met for dinner at Kammený Most, a restaurant-disco-bar beside the Charles Bridge, with a nice medieval interior, though

PRODIGIOUS/ E3

Viva Italia!

From page E1

known throughout Italy as the "café that never closes its doors."

Florence

In the morning, we took the two-and-a-half hour Eurostar train to Florence, and though it was more expensive, we loved it because it was faster and really comfortable.

Unfortunately, when we got to Florence, we were welcomed by the worst service ever in the place we were staying in—a private apartment which rented out its rooms.

The keeper was always snapping at us in Italian every time we asked him about something. He even puffed a cigarette in our room, after adamantly announcing that it was a non-smoking area. Gee.

Our greatest consolation was that it was right next to the train station and a short walking distance to the Duomo, the fourth largest church in the world.

We had our names written in Chinese art in one of the stands outside. And then we walked around the shop-lined streets and to the Piazza della Signora, where we saw the "Rape of the Sabine Women," the replica of "David" and the "Uffizi" (from outside), among other monuments.

Other than that, I personally thought Florence to be quite ordinary, and a lot of its streets were quite old and dirty.

VENICE at sunset

Siena

Less than two hours away from Florence is Siena, Italy's prettiest medieval town.

Siena was really clean, and almost all the streets and walls were cobblestoned and red-bricked. It was really tiring to walk through, though, because Siena is a mountain town, so roads were always on a steep incline.

The highlight of our Siena trip was sitting on the vicinity of Piazza del Campo, in front of the Gothic town hall called Palazzo Pubblico and the bell tower called Torre del Mangia.

It was so relaxing just sitting there, talking and laughing with each other. We watched a cute toddler play soccer with his father, and all of us girls fell in love with him.

Pisa

The next morning, we made a day trip to Pisa, which was also near Florence. We took the 30-minute walking distance to the Leaning Tower by foot.

When we got to the tower, we could only gaze upon it with awe. It was so clean, and looked completely like it did in the postcards. In fact, when our pictures came out, we looked like we were standing in front of a mural.

And like the other tourists, we camped on the grass around the tower and ate the local pastry La Pisamina that we bought, while waiting for the others to come.

Rome

Off to the Eternal City, where we were met by Rhea's auntie Violet and uncle Vic, who took us to our "casa" in two cabs.

Our place in Rome was by far the nicest we had. It was an old convent which had been converted into a bed-and-breakfast inn.

Auntie Violet and uncle Vic then took us on a city tour, showing all of Rome's famous sites (like the Colosseum, the ruins, the Vatican, etc.) in a span of hours.

After a superb dinner, we then walked to the Pantheon and the Trevi Fountain (my favorite!), both chock-full of tourists. I just loved how Rome's largest and most famous fountain glimmered in the moonlight. Sigh.

On our second (and last) day in Rome, auntie Violet and uncle Vic hired a private Filipino driver to take us around the city.

We went to the Boca della Verità, where we each stuck our hands into the mouth and posed for pictures. We drove through the New Rome, which looked very cosmopolitan—almost like any other modern city—and then to the Colosseum. We took photos of some guys dressed as gladiators and also of the Arch of Constantine, which was behind the ancient building.

Then, we hied off to the Vatican. Uncle Vic pointed out the wall that separated the Vatican (a sovereign state ruled by the pope) from the rest of Rome.

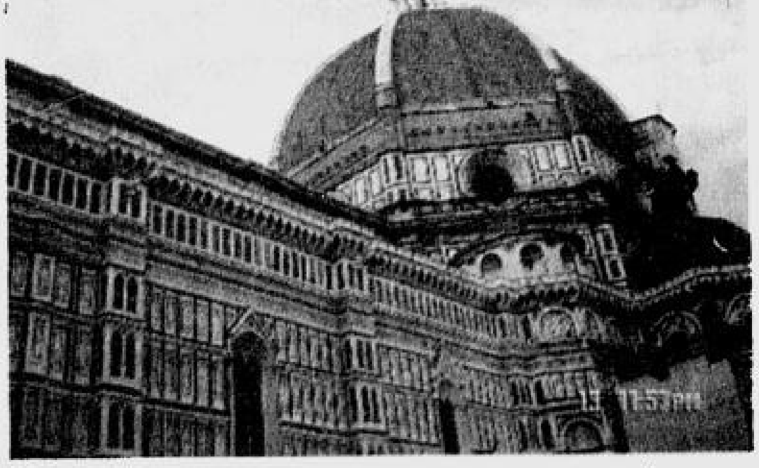
We went into the Vatican Museum, entered the Sistine Chapel and walked over to St. Peter's Basilica. It was the largest church I had ever seen. Inside, of course, was Michaelangelo's "Pietà"—a beauty to behold.

On Sunday, auntie Violet and uncle Vic dropped us off from Rome to Venice, where we were to board our train back to Budapest.

Thus, we left Italy. But each day spent in this country, with friends kind enough to lend me things—Rhea even let me go around with her camera to take whatever photos I wanted—will always be a glorious memory.

I lost my belongings in Europe, but gained so much more.

E-mail the author at chloe_dominique@yahoo.com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Prodigious in Prague

From page E2

none of us ate Czech food.

It was funny. Whenever the three of us would speak in Tagalog, the two guys would get their playful revenge and start speaking in Slovenian, but it was cool because there was a lot of cultural exchange.

We went back to our hostels to change for clubbing. At the last minute, Mattel and Myma decided they didn't want to go, so Miko dropped me off in a taxi at Karlovy Lazné, whose walls boast of being "the biggest club in Middle Europe" and whose fliers scream "5 clubs for the price of 1."

I met up with Marko and Vran, as well as our Taiwanese friends from school, who were also in Prague for the holidays. We were mostly on the first floor, which played R&B and hip-hop. The house also had floors for retro and oldies, chill-out house, trance and techno. The basement had computers where Internet access was free, inclusive in the entrance fee of 100 cz (about P200).

Every floor was packed. Apparently, tourists populate the club, locals don't hang out there. I thought it was ok—i liked it for variety, but there wasn't really anything remarkably special about it.

On Saturday, we went to the Museum of Medieval Torture Instruments. It was actually very interesting to finally see what I had read in my history books.

We crossed Charles Bridge to the Little Quarter—passing by the St. Nicholas' Cathedral and the John Lennon Wall. That disappointed me because there was supposedly a mural—a tribute to John Lennon that Communist authorities had tried to suppress—and at present, even the unjust spray-painted portrait that it was, had been buried under an avalanche of graffiti.

More of Prague

We went back up to the Prague Castle through Nerudova Street, where Czech poet Jan Neruda used to live. Mattel and Myma went back to the Old Town to meet the Taiwanese because they wanted to watch a ballet. I wanted to see more of Prague. Apart from walking around the castle district and struggling from turning into ice (it was around 0 to 1° Celsius), Marko, Vran and I went to Gallery Prague housed in the Prague Castle, for a photography exhibit by Helmut Newton (the famous German photographer best known for his works in French Vogue).

The guys dropped me off at U Cerveneho Raka on the crowded Karlova St. at the Old Town where I met up with the girls to celebrate Colleen's birthday. The Taiwanese girls told us about a black-light theater called Fantastika (black-light theaters are very popular in Prague) so we bought tickets for "Aspects of Alice," which was supposed to be little snippets from "Alice in Wonderland." It was terribly boring and the story made no sense to me, but I was incredibly fascinated with the back lights.

Mattel, Myma and I then checked out the souvenir shops, which were open until 11 p.m. everyday. We bought some postcards of the artwork of Alfons Mucha, one of the country's most celebrated artists who pioneered the Art Nouveau Movement.

On Sunday noon, Mattel, Myma and I heard Mass at Týn Church and then we walked to the Jewish Quarter. Myma and Mattel wanted to go to a museum back to the Old Town Square, but I really wanted to explore the Jewish Quarter, so I went around on my own. I didn't have a map with me but there are plaques on street corners that located the five synagogues. In the end, I was a happy camper, because I was able to see the Old Jewish Cemetery, Klaus Synagogue, Pinkas Synagogue and Maisel Synagogue, and "accidentally" enter the Old-New Synagogue, the oldest operating synagogue in Europe and the earliest Gothic structure in Prague, without paying (because I didn't know and nobody stopped me).

I went and bought a postcard and a collection of the short stories of Franz Kafka, whose life in the Jewish Quarter could have influenced his psyche.

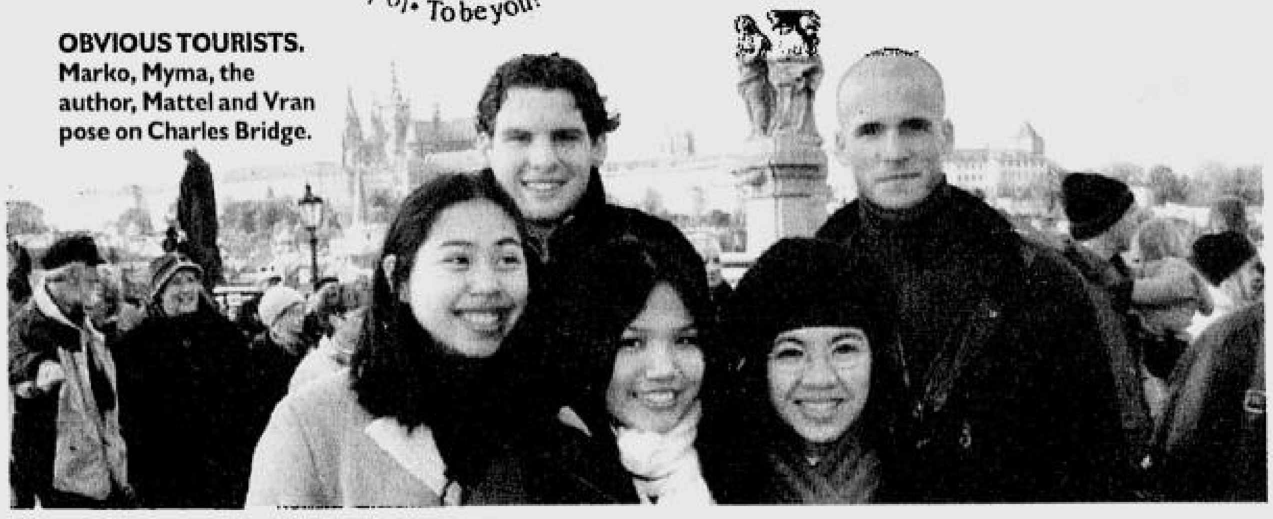
The five of us met again and walked back to the Old Town Square to shop again for souvenirs. At 6 p.m., we chucked our bags back into Marko's car. It was time to leave the city that held us in rapture during the past four days. We stopped at Excalibur City on the way back of course, where this time, I bought 12 euros worth of chocolate for my little sister.

AN ASTRONOMICAL clock

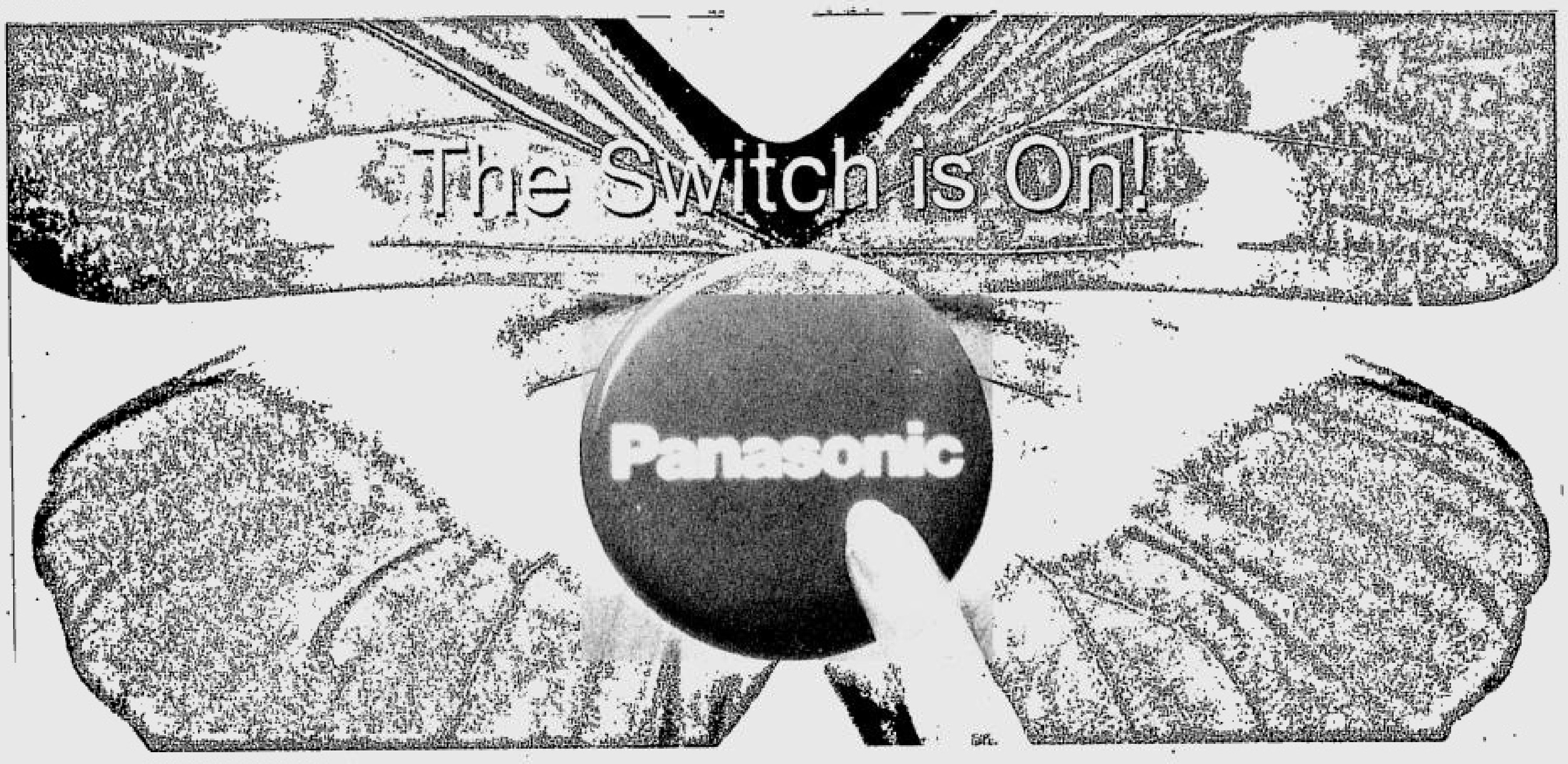
It was at 1 a.m. when we got back to Budapest and we were exhausted. Marko and I had a Hungarian test that day, and though we had brought our notes to Prague, they remained untouched throughout the duration of our stay. Hey, what retard would sacrifice one of the most beautiful cities in the world for some Hungarian test? Migraines, eye-bags, black coffee and burnouts—I'd gladly take them any day.

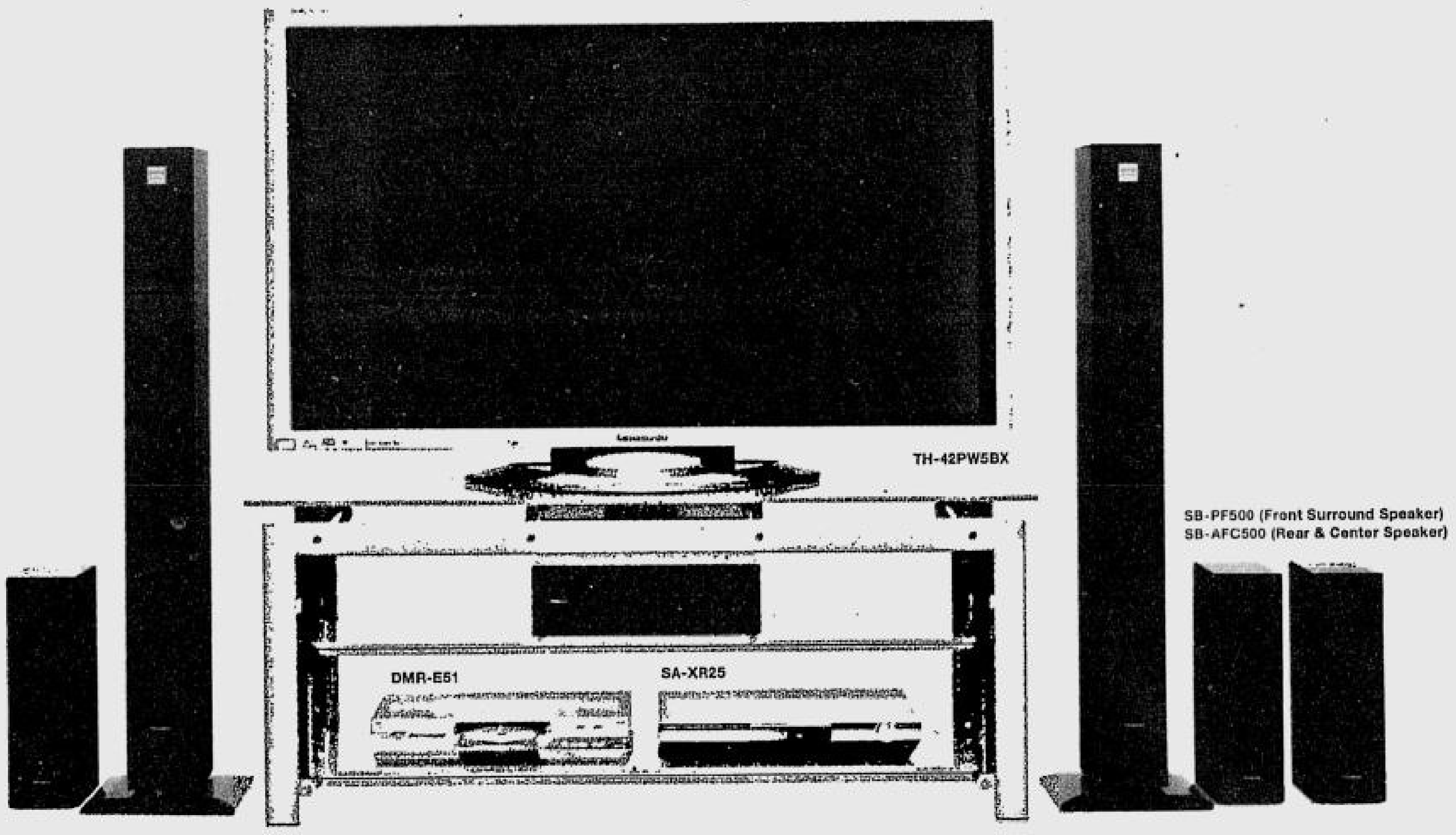
Cheryl Tiu, 2bu! Correspondent

E-mail the author at chloe_dominique@yahoo.com



OBVIOUS TOURISTS. Marko, Myma, the author, Mattel and Vran pose on Charles Bridge.





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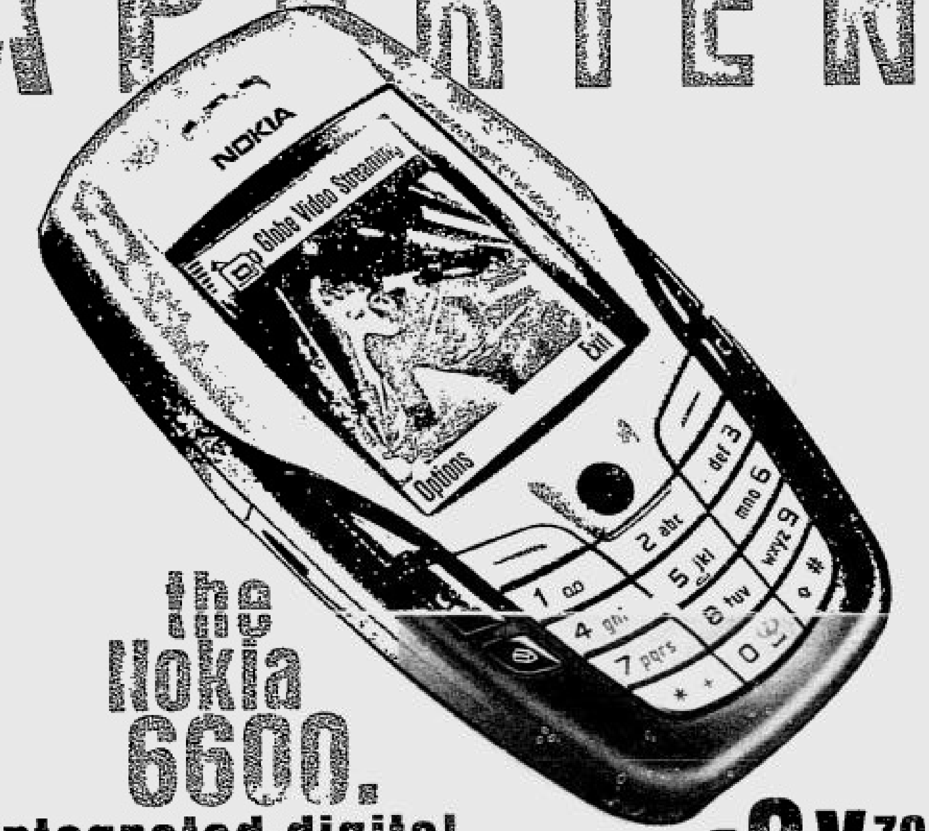
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BE SPECTACULAR.

CUSACK with Ray Liotta in the heart-stopping "Identity"

John Cusack pointblank

At 37, the former teen heartthrob has transformed into one of the most exciting actors of his generation

By Janet Susan R. Nepales
LA Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—John Cusack just had a vegetarian lasagna, chicken, some garlic potatoes and pilaf rice for lunch. Now he's sipping on an almost empty soda paper cup and making slurping sounds.

The rugged unshaven look becomes him. He's one of those lucky guys who can jump out of bed without shaving and brushing hair and still come out looking gorgeous. The six-foot-two tall actor stands out in this movie studio lot even in a casual black jacket, blue denims, and brown shoes.

There is some kind of sadness in his gaze—an enigmatic, hands-off, brooding glance that makes you curious and protective at the same time of this actor who has the qualities of a boy-man.

He talks slowly and in a deep, seemingly tired voice.

At 16, Cusack was the toast of the teen world in Hollywood. He was funny. He was handsome. He was adorable.

He was the precocious preppy we adored in "Class;" the angst-ridden teen in "Sixteen Candles;" the sex-seeking college freshman in "The Sure Thing;" a love-struck high school misfit in "Better Off Dead" and the ultimate teen-lover in "Say Anything."

Then suddenly, John Cusack grew up.

Today, at 37, after more than 40 films and 22 years in the business, Cusack is known for making dark, edgy, neurotic and sometimes even twisted movies. No wonder even Woody Allen cast him in his movies ("Shadows and Fog" and "Bullets Over Broadway").

This afternoon, Cusack is talking to us about his latest whodunit thriller, "Identity," where he portrays a Sartre-reading limo driver.

Directed by James Mangold ("Girl, Interrupted" and "Kate & Leopold"), "Identity" is about 10 travelers who are stranded in an isolated roadside motel. One by one, they begin to die in a shocking, mysterious manner. We are reminded of "Seven," "The Silence of the Lambs," "Poltergeist," "The Omen," "Psycho," "The Sixth Sense" and "Ten Little Indians" with a surprising twist in the end.

Disinterest

Cusack, who is widely admired for his talent, humor and intelligence, is also known for his lack of interest in Hollywood.

A very private person, Cusack admits that he prefers not to do "Hollywood stuff."

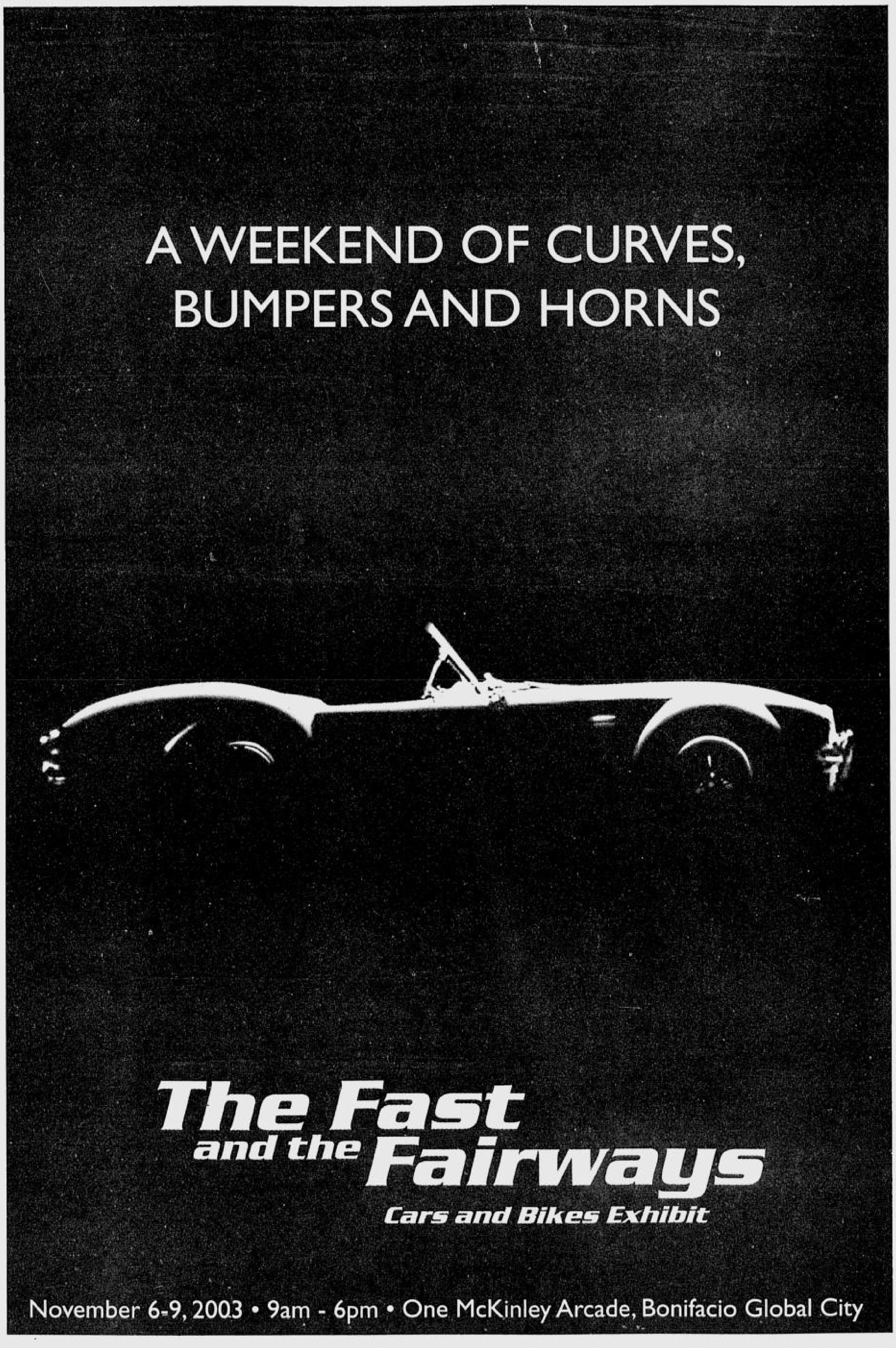
"I don't like the paparazzi," he says. "I don't do tours. I don't enjoy junkets. I don't go to the Oscars at all. I do go to places but I don't go to Hollywood places."

In other words, he shuns celebrity. For him, "Celebrity is death."

Born in Evanston, Illinois, this Cancerian reveals, "Hollywood is a very sick place where making money is more important than creating art. Isn't that kind of sick? Or maybe, I'm just idealistic. I'm sorry but I can't be Mr. Charming all the time."

JOHN/ F3

THE BOY-MAN actor is now known for making dark, edgy, neurotic movies.



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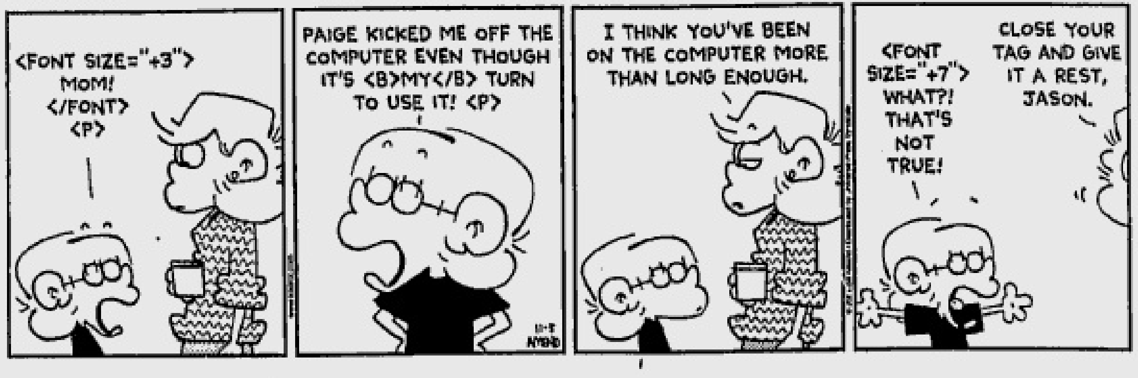
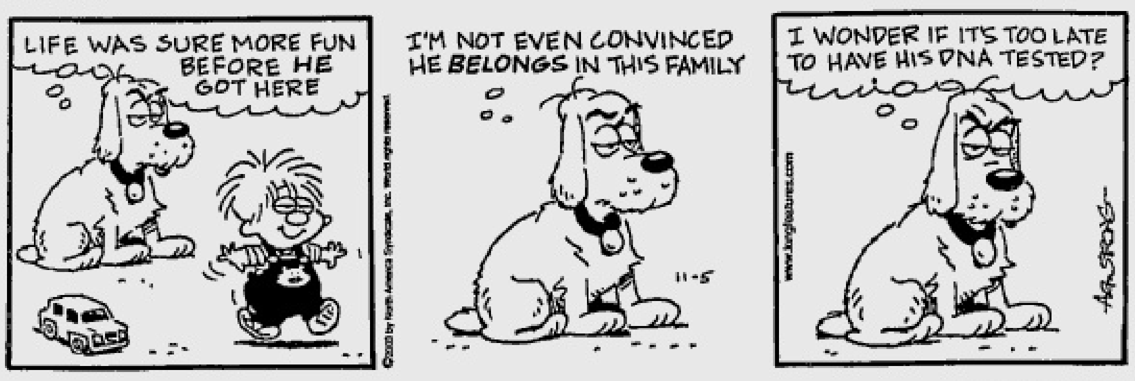

<FONT SIZE="+3"> MOM! </FONT> <P>
PAIGE KICKED ME OFF THE COMPUTER EVEN THOUGH IT'S <B>MY</B> TURN TO USE IT! <P>
I THINK YOU'VE BEEN ON THE COMPUTER MORE THAN LONG ENOUGH.
<FONT SIZE="+7"> WHAT?! THAT'S NOT TRUE!
CLOSE YOUR TAG AND GIVE IT A REST, JASON.
11-5

MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


LIFE WAS SURE MORE FUN BEFORE HE GOT HERE
I'M NOT EVEN CONVINCED HE BELONGS IN THIS FAMILY
I WONDER IF IT'S TOO LATE TO HAVE HIS DNA TESTED?
11-5
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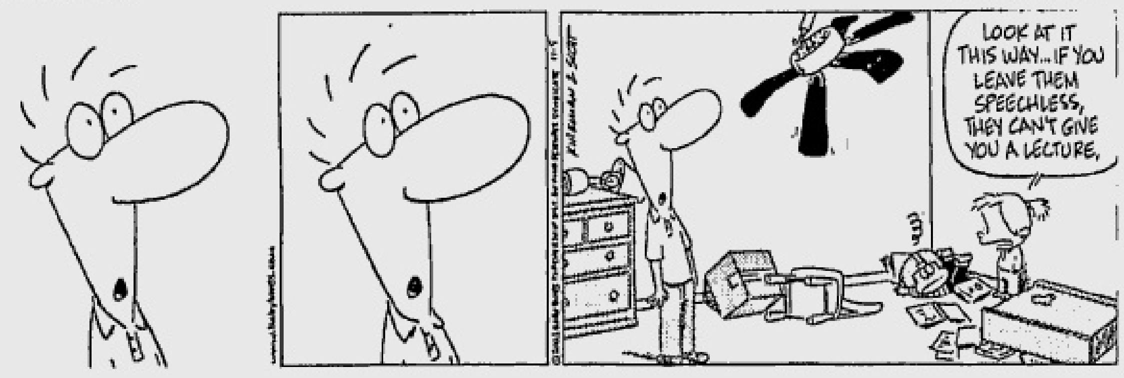
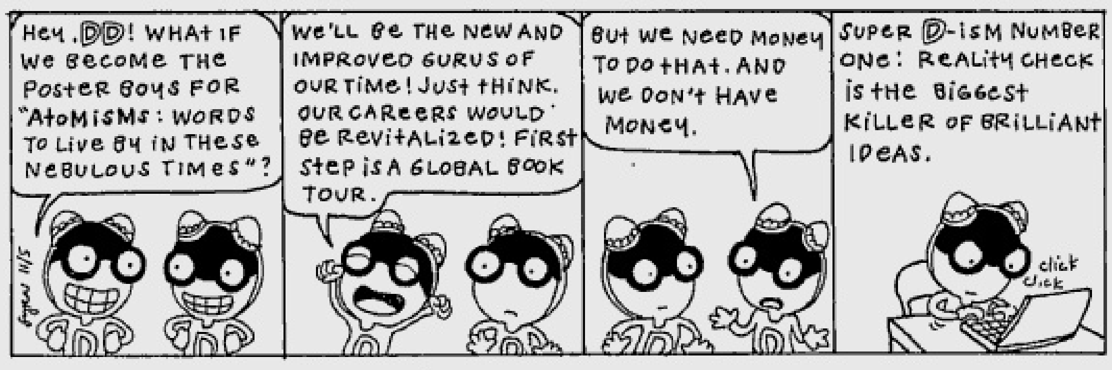
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


LOOK AT IT THIS WAY... IF YOU LEAVE THEM SPEECHLESS, THEY CAN'T GIVE YOU A LECTURE,
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, DD! WHAT IF WE BECOME THE POSTER BOYS FOR "ATOMISMS: WORDS TO LIVE BY IN THESE NEBULOUS TIMES"?
WE'LL BE THE NEW AND IMPROVED GURUS OF OUR TIME! JUST THINK. OUR CAREERS WOULD BE REVITALIZED! FIRST STEP IS A GLOBAL BOOK TOUR.
BUT WE NEED MONEY TO DO THAT. AND WE DON'T HAVE MONEY.
SUPER D-ISM NUMBER ONE: REALITY CHECK IS THE BIGGEST KILLER OF BRILLIANT IDEAS.
click click
11/5

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: Essentially, you are a realist. You are modern and up-to-date. You speak the truth; you debunk the lies in society. You are intrigued by mystery and are good at solving problems. You stay abreast of current events and the media. Expect to accomplish a lot in the year ahead. Give it your best shot.
Birthdate of: Sam Shepard, writer/actor; Bryan Adams, singer/songwriter; Art Garfunkel, singer/actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is the perfect day to have a serious discussion about shared property or the joint ownership of something. You might also decide how to share responsibility for someone.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You have a great opportunity to get to know yourself better through a close relationship today. It's as if this person's eyes mirror your own soul back to you. (Spooky.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Take a look at your work habits today. What can you do to improve them for your long-term future? Think about practical applications and results.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You might be attracted to someone of a different age today. This could be a harmless crush. On the other hand, it might grow into something more serious.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Great day to talk to family members about long-range plans. Or perhaps you want to develop an overall plan to make everything at home run more smoothly in a practical fashion.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Someone older could have good advice for you today. This person's experience could offer valuable insight to you. (After all, you don't have to reinvent the wheel.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is a very good day for any kind of work that requires discipline and self-control. You're prepared to do your homework and to take care of the nitty-gritty details.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You derive great satisfaction and fulfillment from your efforts today. Matters connected with publishing, higher education, the law and travel are particularly rewarding.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Make long-range plans about wills, inheritances, estates and reducing debt. The "drop in the bucket" approach to debt is the best. Drip, drip, drip—and eventually, the bucket will be full. (Of course, that's how debt builds as well.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You're prepared to put the interests of others before your own today. What concerns you most are getting the job done and doing it right.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Examine your life today and the structures that you have put in place. See what is working for you and what is not. Be honest with yourself.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Serious discussions about lofty topics can be surprisingly productive today. Your thinking is not pie-in-the-sky; it is grounded, practical and realistic.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Cass or Michelle
5 Cooks
10 Charity
14 Actor Guinness
15 __ Selassie
16 Castle defense
17 Welles role
18 Invalidate
19 Pro's opponent
20 Flightless bird
21 Pointer
23 Gnawing mammals
25 Group of whales
26 Anglers' gear
27 Fitting
32 Lustrous
34 Kinda
35 Feedbag grain
36 Ullmann and Tyler
37 Sharp-tasting
38 Clown
39 "__ Got You Under My Skin"
40 Hint of color
41 Subway fare
42 Oral appliances
44 Singer McEntire
45 __ more time!
46 Kitchen appliance
49 Grunt work
54 Will Smith title role
55 Composer Stravinsky
56 Dine at home
57 Large wading bird
58 European capital
59 Sleep soundly?
60 Lotion additive
61 Mellowed
62 Actress Duncan
63 New Jersey cagers

DOWN
1 Creator
2 Texas shrine
3 Like user-friendly programs
4 High card
5 Speaks monotonously
6 Rotating pointers
7 "__ kleine Nachtmusik"
8 Constant change
9 Indulgent sorrow
10 Actress Plummer
11 Yearn
12 Aussie's pal
13 Mix
21 500-mile race
22 Smidgeon
24 Years and years
27 Melodies
28 Implore
29 Make dinner reservations
30 Take it easy
31 School collar
32 Skidded
33 Bee's pad
34 Of sound mind
37 Indefatigable
38 Moves up and down
40 Sushi fish
41 Briny droplet
43 Traveled
44 Mickey or Andy
46 Mustang's bro
47 George who was Mary
48 Gets up
49 Ms. Sorvino
50 Keyed up
51 Alaska city
52 Sweater-girl Turner
53 Egyptian god of the sun
57 Actor McKellen

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	8	9	■	10	11	12	13
14				■	15					■	16			
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49	50	51				52	53				■	54		
55				■	56					■	57			
58				■	59					■	60			
61				■	62					■	63			

By Norma Steinberg
San Francisco, CA

11/5/03

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

U	M	P	S	■	E	W	E	R	■	S	H	O	O	K
P	E	R	E	■	R	O	D	E	■	T	E	R	S	E
B	R	E	D	■	A	L	G	A	■	E	X	A	L	T
O	C	E	A	N	■	F	E	R	A	L	■	L	O	T
W	I	N	N	I	N	G	S	M	I	L	E	■	■	■
■	■	■	S	T	O	A	■	S	L	A	V	I	N	G
O	F	T	■	T	O	N	E	■	■	■	I	D	E	E
D	R	A	W	I	N	G	T	O	A	C	L	O	S	E
D	A	M	E	■	■	■	A	L	V	A	■	S	S	R
S	T	E	A	M	E	D	■	D	O	R	M	■	■	■
■	■	■	L	O	S	I	N	G	W	E	I	G	H	T
A	L	S	■	L	E	G	A	L	■	T	A	H	O	E
J	A	P	E	D	■	I	D	O	L	■	S	O	U	P
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R	A	T	E	D	■	S	A	Y	S	■	A	L	E	E

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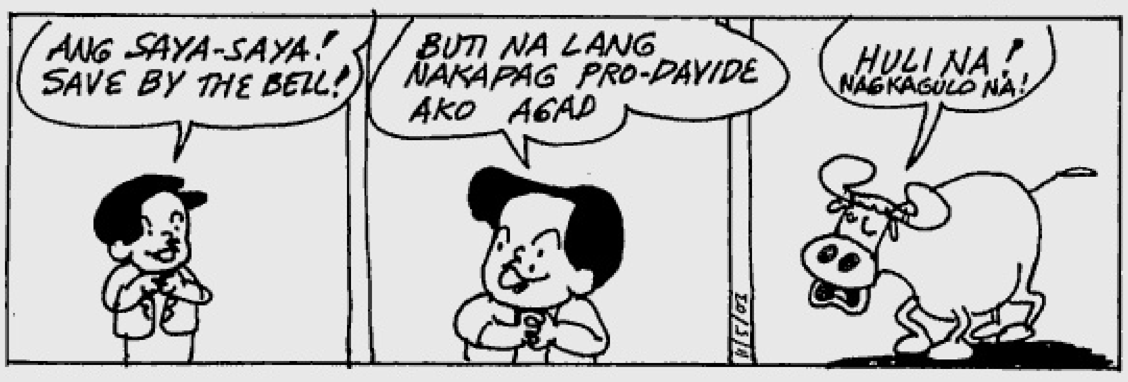
11/5/03

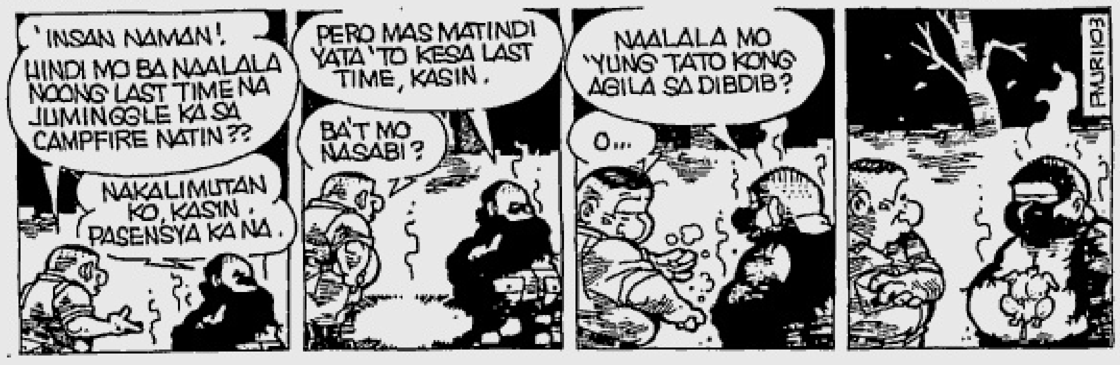
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG SAYA-SAYA! SAVE BY THE BELL!
BUTI NA LANG NAKAPAG PRO-DAVIDE AKO AGAD
HULI NA! NAGKAGULO NA!
11/5/03

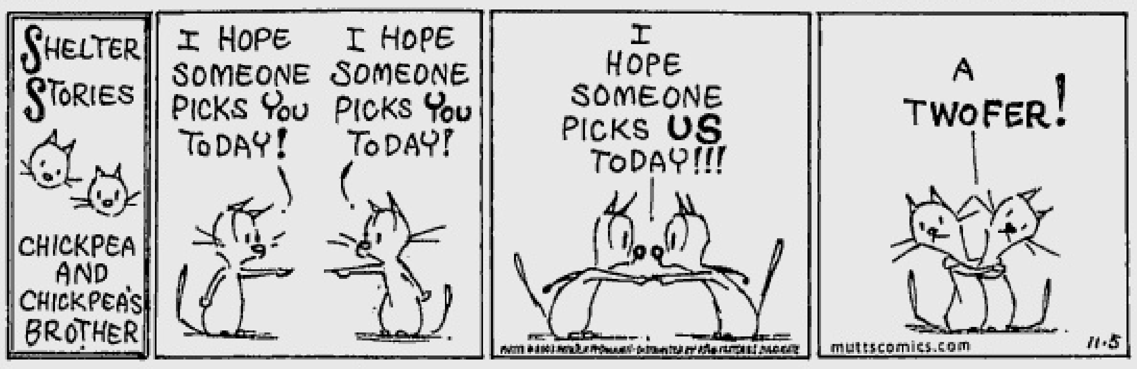
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


'INSAN NAMAN! HINDI MO BA NAALALA NOONG LAST TIME NA JUMINGGLE KA SA CAMPFIRE NATIN??
NAKALIMUTAN KO, KASIN. PASENSYA KA NA.
PERO MAS MATINDI YATA 'TO KESA LAST TIME, KASIN.
BA'T MO NASABI?
NAALALA MO 'YUNG TATO KONG AGILA SA DIBDIB?
O...
PMJR1103

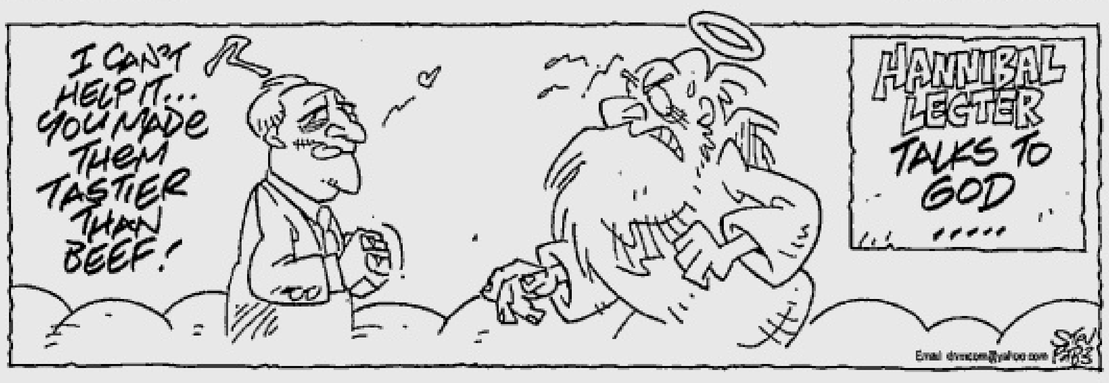
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHELTER STORIES
CHICKPEA AND CHICKPEA'S BROTHER
I HOPE SOMEONE PICKS YOU TODAY!
I HOPE SOMEONE PICKS YOU TODAY!
I HOPE SOMEONE PICKS US TODAY!!!
A TWOFER!
muttscomics.com
11-5

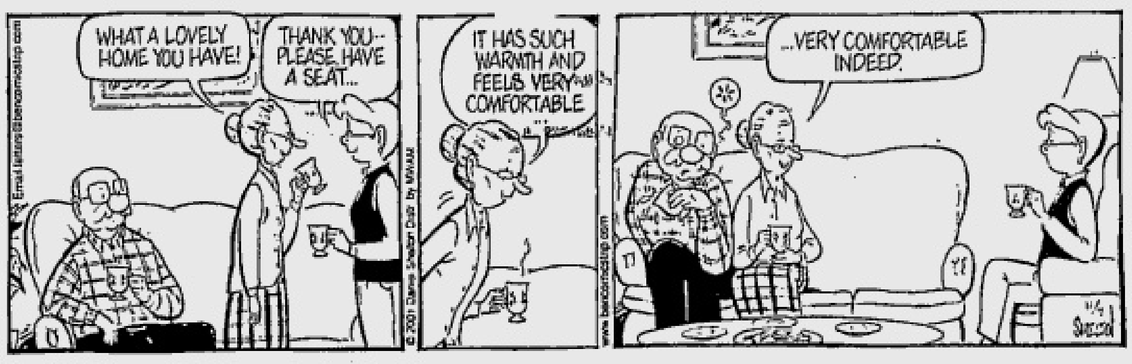
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


I CAN'T HELP IT... YOU MADE THEM TASTIER THAN BEEF!
HANNIBAL LECTER TALKS TO GOD .....
Email: divcom@yahoo.com

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WHAT A LOVELY HOME YOU HAVE!
THANK YOU-- PLEASE HAVE A SEAT...
IT HAS SUCH WARMTH AND FEELS VERY COMFORTABLE
...VERY COMFORTABLE INDEED.
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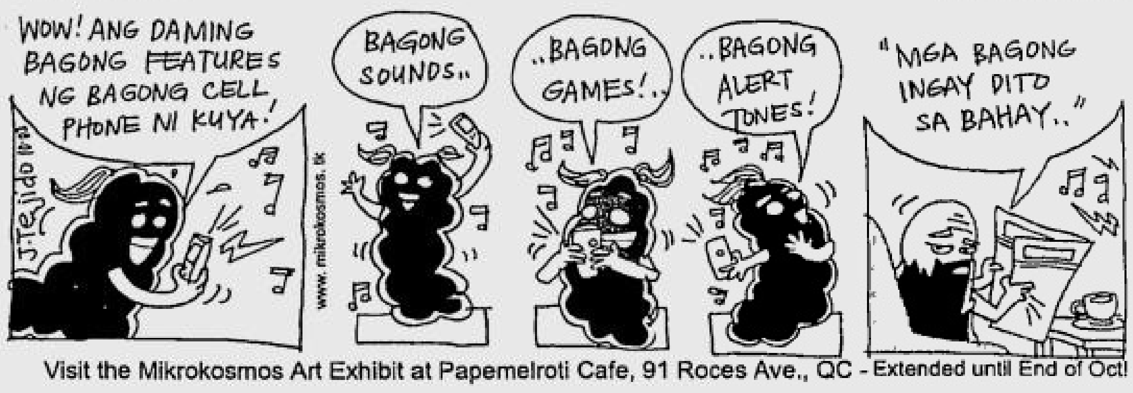
SHELTON

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


WOW! ANG DAMING BAGONG FEATURES NG BAGONG CELL PHONE NI KUYA!
BAGONG SOUNDS..
..BAGONG GAMES!..
..BAGONG ALERT TONES!
"MGA BAGONG INGAY DITO SA BAHAY.."
J.Tejido
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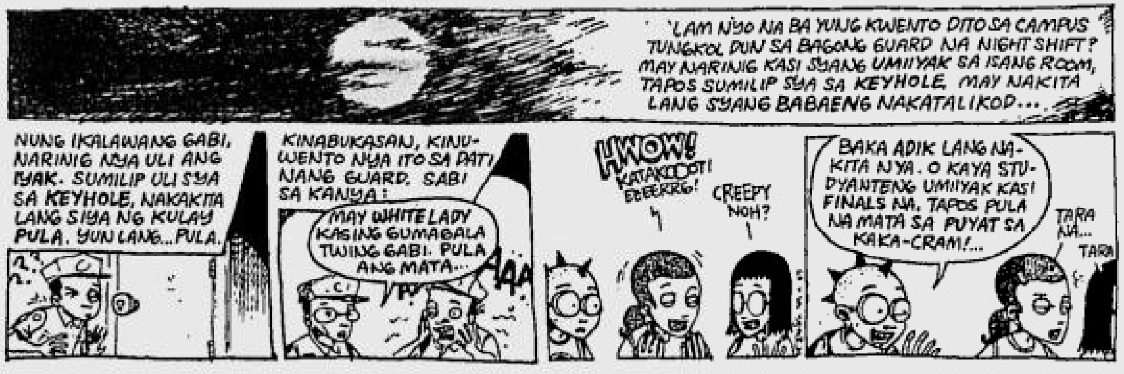
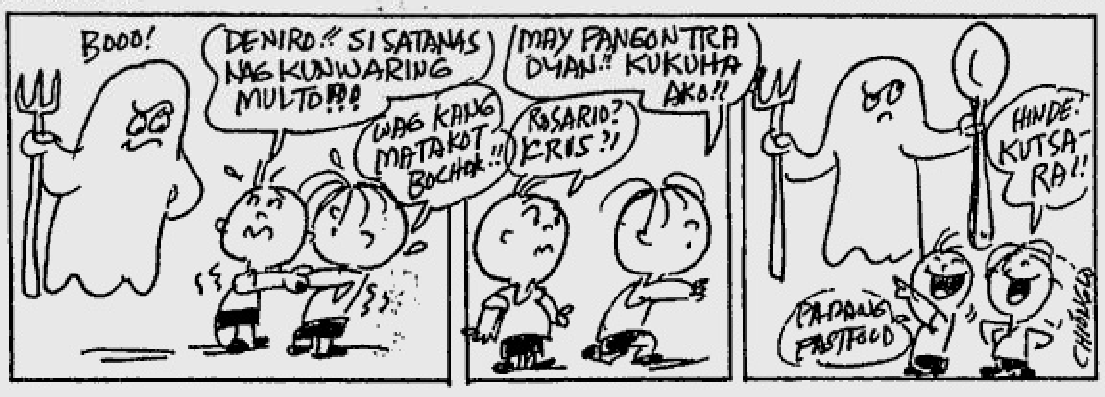
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


'LAM NYO NA BA YUNG KWENTO DITO SA CAMPUS TUNGKOL DUN SA BAGONG GUARD NA NIGHT SHIFT? MAY NARINIG KASI SYANG UMIIYAK SA ISANG ROOM, TAPOS SUMILIP SYA SA KEYHOLE. MAY NAKITA LANG SYANG BABAENG NAKATALIKOD...
NUNG IKALAWANG GABI, NARINIG NYA ULI ANG IYAK. SUMILIP ULI SYA SA KEYHOLE, NAKAKITA LANG SIYA NG KULAY PULA. YUN LANG... PULA.
KINABUKASAN, KINUWENTO NYA ITO SA DATING GUARD. SABI SA KANYA:
MAY WHITE LADY KASING GUMAGALA TWING GABI. PULA ANG MATA...
AAA
HWOW! KATAKOT! EEEERRG!
CREEPY NOH?
BAKA ADIK LANG NAKITA NYA. O KAYA STUDYANTENG UMIIYAK KASI FINALS NA. TAPOS PULA NA MATA SA PUYAT SA KAKA-CRAM!...
TARA NA...
TARA

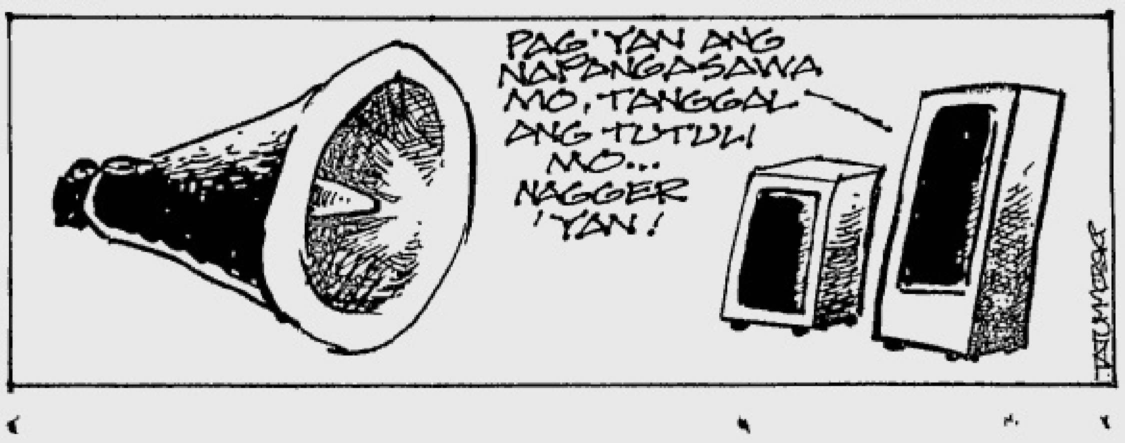
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


BOOO!
DENIRO!! SI SATANAS NAGKUNWARING MULTO!!!
WAG KANG MATAKOT BOCHOK!!
MAY PANGONTRA DYAN!! KUKUHA AKO!!
ROSARIO? KRIS?!
HINDE! KUTSARA!!
PADANG FASTFOOD
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


PAG 'YAN ANG NAPANGASAWA MO, TANGGAL ANG TUTULI MO... NAGGER 'YAN!
TATUM

John Cusack pointblank

"I LOVE the rain and it created a pretty consistent mood," says Cusack of his latest film, where he plays a limo driver with a secret.

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From page F1

Sibling rivalry

Cusack, who comes from a very creative family, insists that there is no sibling rivalry. "We are very supportive of each other. Maybe we are competitive but we're not a mean-spirited family." The Cusack siblings are all actors: Ann, Joan, Bill, John and Suzie.

Dad Richard is a filmmaker (an Emmy-Award winning documentary filmmaker) and writer. And mom Nancy is a math teacher.

Cusack jokes of his mom, "Sometimes, I wonder if she is really our mother because none of her children has any of her math skills."

He is so lucky, he says, that "I got exposed to a lot of theater, films and musicals when I was growing up."

Transition

For Cusack, much of the 1980s were spent making teen movies. "I realized I was getting popular when I got all the girls who would never look at me before," he says, amused.

Then the "grown-up" fare came. He did the con artist in "The Grifters," the neurotic writer-director in "Bullets Over Broadway," the sad-sack puppeteer in "Being John Malkovich," the hitman in "Grosse Pointe Blank," the music-obsessed cad in "High Fidelity," the deputy to a corrupt mayor in "City Hall," and the celebrated gallery owner who meets aspiring artist, Adolf Hitler, in "Max."

Cusak has just finished "The Runaway Jury" with Gene Hackman and Dustin Hoffman.

Asked if he consciously chose the dark, rebellious characters he has become known for, Cusack replies, "I have no idea what people's perception of me is, other than when I meet journalists, and they tell me. But I'm just trying to do roles that I think are interesting."

Then he admits, "But yes, I do have a bit of a rebellious nature."

One of the most horrible things he had done, he confesses, was "make a bet with someone that if my movie "Grosse Pointe Blank" (which he wrote) got financed, I'd go to my 10th high school reunion. The movie was financed and so I did go."

"It was twisted," he reveals. "Ten years is everything. You had those who went deeper into addiction; those who got married and divorced; those who are still angry at the world; and those who have radically changed. You had the whole gamut of portraits of 10 years."

Asked whether he has ever played a "straight guy," Cusack replies, "Yes, I have. But I don't know if anybody is straight. In my experience, there are all these different shades in people."

Hit movie

About "Identity," which opened at No. 1 in the US box office with $17 million in earnings on the first week, Cusack says he likes his role as the limo driver Ed because "it is less verbal than most characters I have ever done. It has a minimalist aspect to the script. It is very economical."

He adds, "I've also never seen a film where the twist happens at the beginning of the third act and there's still more movie to go. It just keeps on surprising you. It has so much edge."

Director Mangold says that "John brings a subtle kind of humanity to even his most serious roles, a warmth that I felt would be a great asset to a story which, at times, is pretty dark and frightening. He has charm and amazing screen presence that make his performances memorable."

Cusack found himself immediately taken with the script. "I love the rain and it created a pretty consistent mood. We'd show up early in the morning, looking for coffee to wake us up before shooting started and then we'd be doused with cold water all day long. So remaining alert was never a problem."

He believes the movie is a "good combination of a popcorn commercial movie and real smart Hitchcock-y kind of stuff. It's like a jigsaw puzzle or a crossword puzzle."

The real Cusack

So is the real John Cusack dark and moody as well, we ask him.

"I am really a comic," he says. "I want to have fun with friends. To let loose, I play basketball, dance, go to movies ... everything! I'm not a dark person."

And if he was not an actor today, "I'd be a writer. I love observing people and putting all my thoughts on paper."

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The Chinese-American Amos and McLachlan

Waking Hour (2002)
Vienna Teng

By Cris Silva
2bUI Correspondent

REVIEW

WHO is Vienna Teng? She is a young second-generation Chinese-American singer/songwriter. She is also a classically trained pianist based in San Francisco.

Strangely, she is also a Computer Science graduate from Stanford University. It was there where she started recording what would become her debut album.

"Waking Hour" is a collection of 13 beautifully crafted songs, half of which feature her simply singing and piano-playing.

But there are a few tracks that have more upbeat and pop-influenced arrangements. There's also a song with a Latin-gypsy violin sound and another which has an ethereal new-age hymn.

But it isn't the enchanting melodies that hook one on the music; it's the honest and intelligent lyrics sung by a charming voice.

Listening to her hauntingly introspective lyrics can be a painfully sweet experience. Most of the songs are explorations of love and relationships.

"I think I sort of aspire to be the third corner of a triangle, where the other two are Sarah McLachlan and Tori Amos," said Teng, 25, in an online interview (http://www.collectedsounds.com/interviews/intervienna.html). "Those are my two most obvious influences, to the point that I actively try to listen to something else so that I don't become a mere knock-off of either one.

"But really my influences are all over the map—Afro-Cuban music, jangly guitar rock, madrigals, modern jazz, epic movie soundtracks."

Her music has the feeling of a younger—and female—David Gray.

It is a challenge to single out the best songs in an album that hides no bad ones. It is one of those albums where your favorites would keep changing weekly or monthly.

Teng's voice soars and wanes with such delicate precision in the love song, "Gravity."

"Unwritten Letter #1" is a departure from most of the tracks for its playful Latin beat and evocative violins, which contrast with the lyrics about the sweet misfortune of a secret unrequited love for a friend.

"Eric's Song" is an exquisitely tender song that meditates on fate's hand in love: "For we don't realize/our faith in the prize/unless it's been somehow elusive/how swiftly we choose it/the sacred simplicity of you at my side."

"Soon Love" may remind one of a quieter and more spiritual version of "The Circle of Life," the powerful opening song from Disney's "The Lion King." It is perhaps the one most distinct song in the album for its harmonious chanting and percussion, but it still maintains the subtlety and restraint of the album.

This album is best listened to while driving around a deserted tree-lined street before sunset during the summer holidays or while alone in bed on a cold rainy day.

Available in Music One at P375.

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THE FASHION FREAKS

More funky booty for you

This week, we were able to find gems for you—Ralph Lauren's Skinny shirts, Topshop's newest collection, Beadnik's beaded bra straps, striped bands from the Intramuros Night Market, a 19-year-old who waves her magic decoupage wand. Last Halloween, we also lurked around town and found out just how costume-crazy people can get. Enjoy

Here at the Fashion Freaks headquarters, we get the best training at snooping around

onstage 2nyt

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A skinny fit

By Francine Palines
2bUI Correspondent

FINALLY, Ralph Lauren has decided to update his iconic Polo shirt and turn it into a fashion must-have for today's trendy set.

It's called the "Skinny"—and it suggests just that—a slimmer and sexier shirt that can be worn with anything.

The tee still has that classic two-button placket, ribbed collar, cuffs and uneven vented hem that everyone loves.

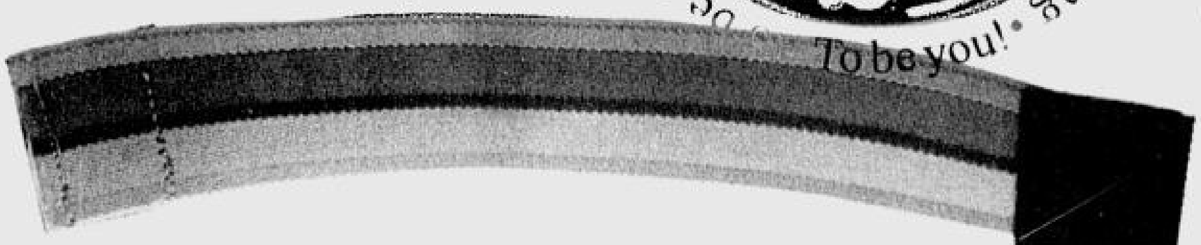
But it's really the material of the shirt—cotton mesh—that gives it its sexy, shrunken fit.

From a flirty miniskirt to some kick-ass jeans, this shirt will do anyone good. This baby also comes in a variety of colors, the better to coordinate your get-up.

You can customize your shirt at the Polo "bars" of Ralph Lauren stores in the US or take a trip to polo.com.

Don't forget—if you're buying online, it's better to order a size larger. The shirt costs about $52 when bought on the Web, and $53 in retail, and for an added $10, you've got your perfect Polo.

There are also plans to transform the Skinny into flirty Polo dresses, halter styles and long-sleeved versions. Watch out for these!



Unlikely fashion finds

IF you think the only things you can buy from the Intramuros Night Market are native stuff, you're wrong.

There are stalls and stalls piled high and covered with all kinds of accessories in dizzying styles—beaded, wooden, crystal, etc.

Among last week's favorite finds were these striped bands that come in different color combinations.

Some stalls sell them for P35 each, others give you three in exchange for P100. But brandish your haggling skills and you can always bring the prices down.

Just goes to show that fashion finds are all over—even in the most unlikely of places. P.P.

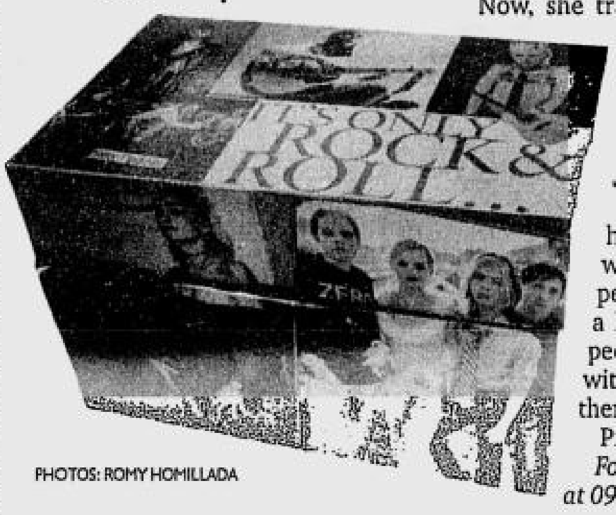
PHOTOS: ROMY HOMILLADA

The ultimate image-maker

YOUR F4-themed lunchbox or Madonna gift box is just one call away.

Nineteen-year-old Felice Capicoy discovered her flair for decoupage in one of the classes she was taking in her interior design course.

Felice skipped the flowers and leaves and opted to use pop culture icons in her products. Now, she transforms boxes, storage containers and lunch boxes into works of art.



PHOTOS: ROMY HOMILLADA

Her recent creations use the images of No Doubt, Cher, Aubrey Hepburn, Stevie Nicks, Joni Mitchell and Janis Joplin.

Decoupage used to be just a hobby for this girl, but after her work caught the eye of many people, she decided to turn it into a home-based business, allowing people to order products stamped with images that are significant to them.

Prices start at P150.

For orders and inquiries, call Felice at 0917-7458662. P.P.

Beaded bra straps, anyone?

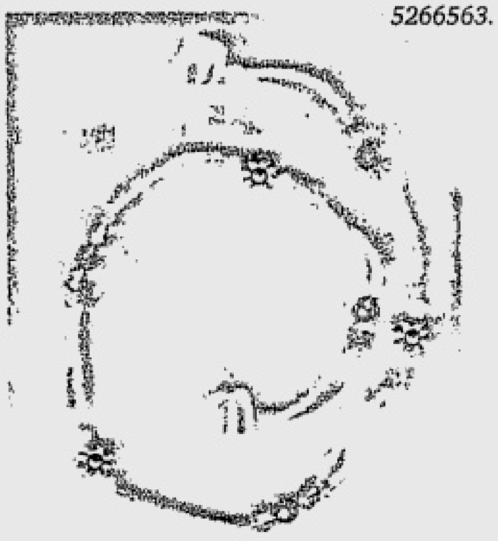
ADD color to your wardrobe with these limited edition, handmade beaded bra straps with cat's eye, silver and faux crystal from Beadnik.

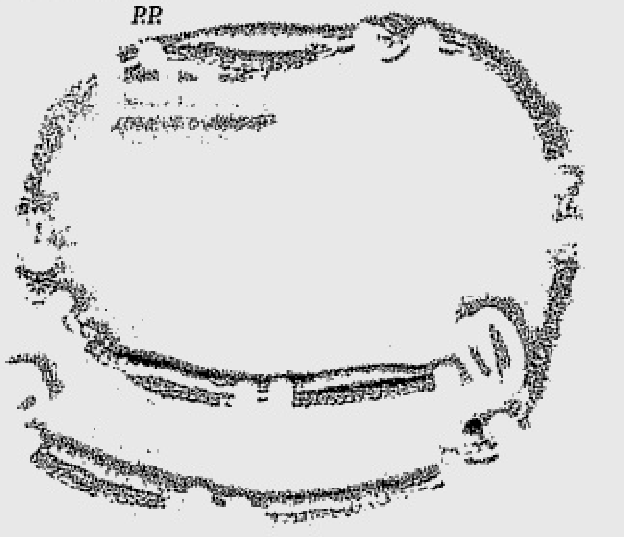
Tals Diaz, the woman behind these colorful creations, got started on her bra business because of her desire to upgrade her own beachwear. Soon, friends were clamoring for their own pairs and orders were pouring in.

Tals sells these accessories at bazaars, but you can also contact her for orders.

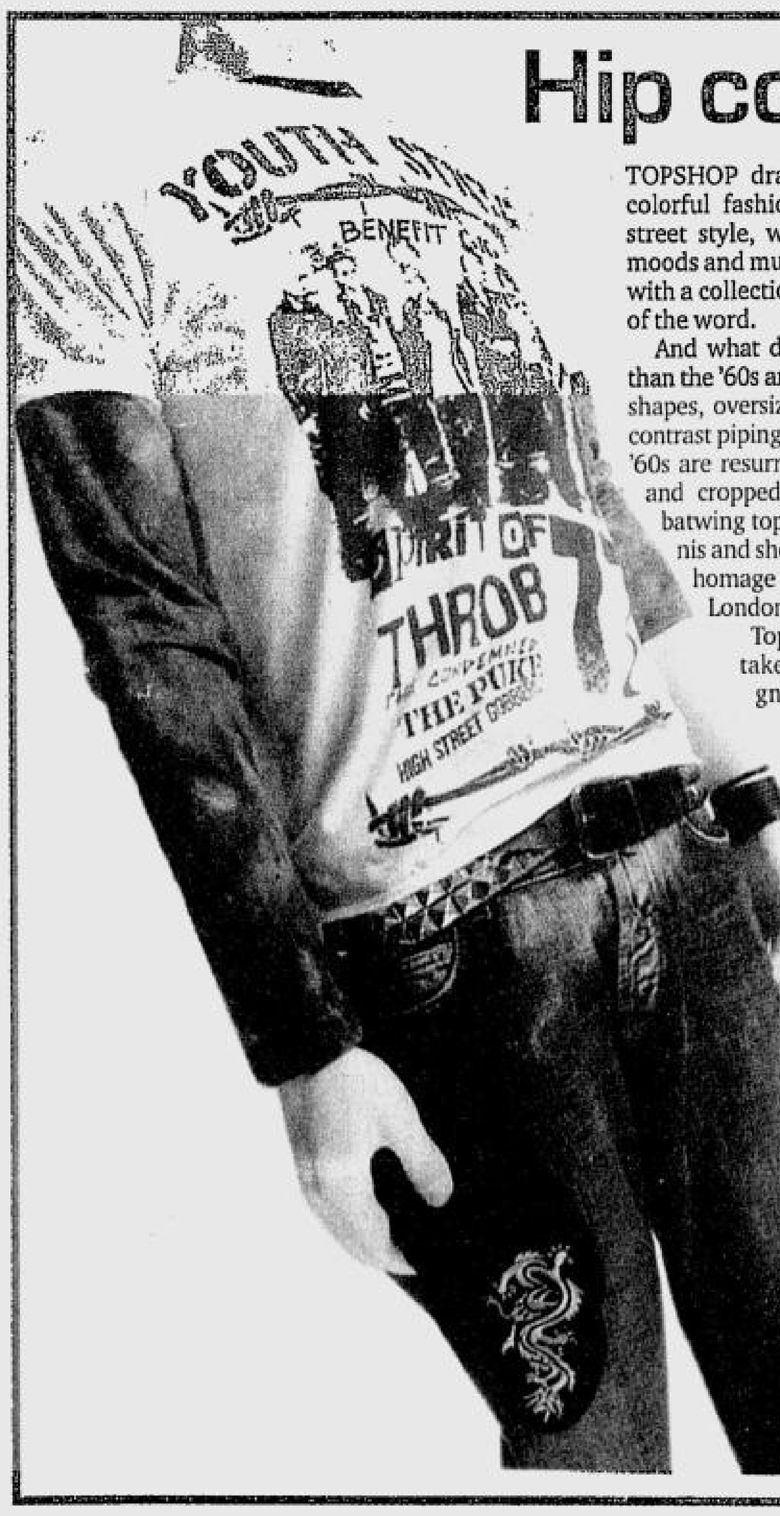
Each pair goes for P300.

Call (don't text) 0917-5266563. P.P.





Hip collection from the '60s and '80s



TOPSHOP draws inspiration from the most colorful fashion decades and the coolest of street style, while Topman looks toward the moods and music of this era's youth to come up with a collection that spells h-i-p in every sense of the word.

And what decades can be more fashionable than the '60s and '80s? Clean silhouettes, cut out shapes, oversize buttons, Peter Pan collars and contrast piping trends that are reminiscent of the '60s are resurrected in mini skirts, shin dresses and cropped jackets. Eighties essentials like batwing tops and dresses, leggings, microminis and shoulder blouson tops are revived as homage to the legendary underground London club scene.

Topshop likewise goes pop as it takes inspiration from Avril Lavigne's skater-girl look with a collection of denim, cargo pants, tees, tartan micro kilts, colored knitwear and all-weather parka.

For Topman, youth culture is the ultimate inspiration with a collection that is heavily influenced by punk and psychobilly. Black is the ultimate cool color while detailed trousers, hoodies and formal wear are the essential get-up. Parkas and duster coats in reflective fabrics and yanks are the fundamental must-haves. Multistripe knits, drainpipe trousers, bomber jackets are items that one should likewise never do without this season.

Check out Topshop's latest collections at its stores in Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Department Store Galleria, Robinsons Place Manila, Shangri-La Edsa Plaza Mall and Glorietta 2. Topman stores are located at Robinsons Place Manila, Robinsons Galleria and Robinsons Department Store Galleria.

THE SEA Princess unravels like a queen.

READY for the opera. With a Venetian mask in tow, she's set for the masquerade.

TUT me. A traveling French tourist with his Las Vegas pharaoh buddy

ARE they on or are they not? Antoinette Taus plays little angel to Dingdong "Neo" Dantes.

PLAYMATES of the year. [illegible] Turvey as a Thai kickboxer with Geoff Rodriguez in playboy pimp wear.

POSE like an Egyptian. Cleopatra honors us with her presence.

'Rock and Royalty' in phantasmagoric color

By Jason Doplito
2bU! Correspondent

IN AN EXCUSE for the ordinary and average to explode into such a stupendous exhibition of absurdity and endearing madness, Greenbelt's "Rock and Royalty" Halloween Ball made sure it was a party worth dressing up crazy for.

Fab prizes, good music, and the company of fellow "social drinkers" and dance divas fired up the night in an ironic twist to the Celebration of the Dead.

Some came as Elizabethan royalty, others as what could only be described as deformed fungi.

There was Frida Kahlo mingling with a Dalmatian mascot, P. Diddy rocking with a mutated sausage and Hugh Hefner surrounded by his playmates.

It certainly was a concoction unlike any other—a United Nations for the gothic, stylish and crazy.

Here are this year's deliciously wicked Halloween fashion statements:

RESCUE ME. A knight in shining armor cozies up to a Spanish gypsy.

LIKE a virgin. Lotho in an '80s Madonna/tea party look with an almost-Christina Aguilera friend

DOWN with tweezers. These Frida Kahlos are hands down the *señoritas* of the party.

YOU can only wonder if she's got all 101 dalmatians on her.

DAINTY Audrey Hepburn looks lost in the company of an Amazon woman and a bejeweled Persian couple.

THE UNDERWORLD. These goths are happy but they ain't smiling.

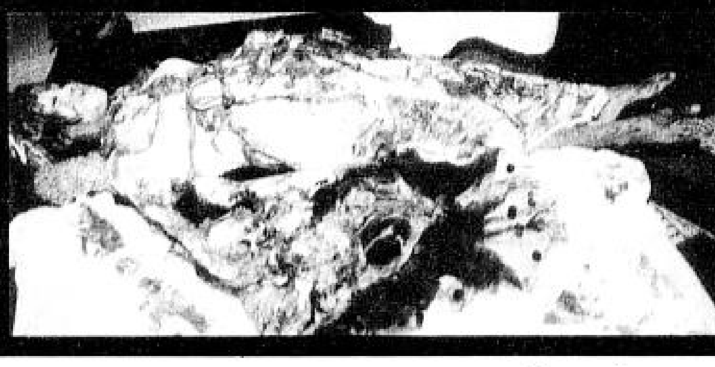
PIRATE poopers. Royal ruffians on board!

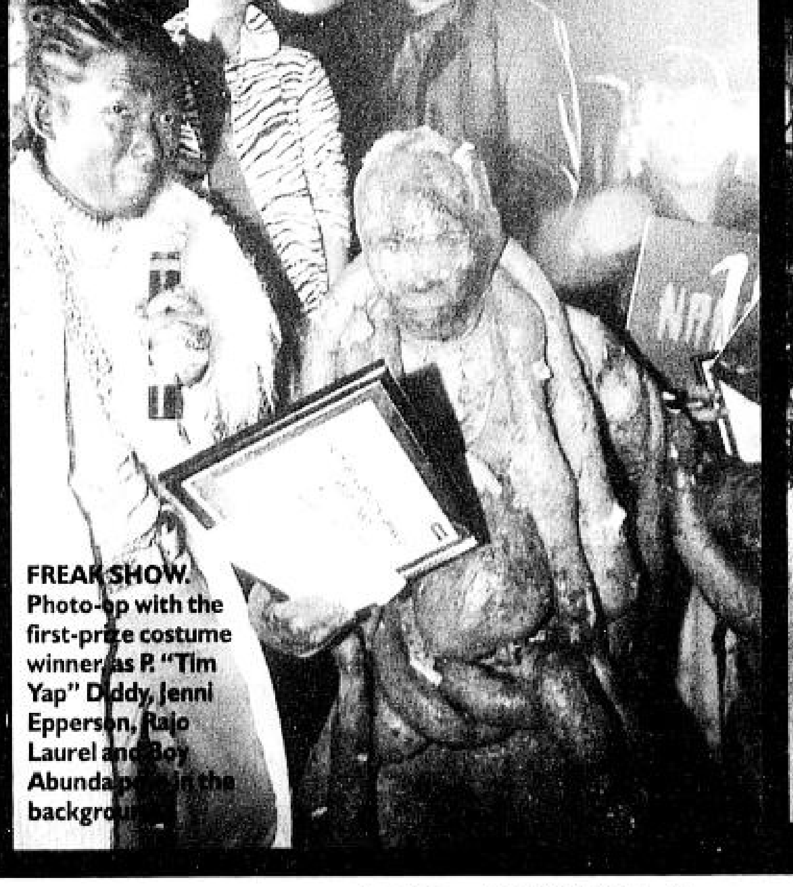
THIS threesome wouldn't want to be near the Ghostbusters.

GUARDIAN Angel

QUEEN of the Damned. Geneva Cruz does Akasha.

SEEMS like Halloween has become an outlet for repressed sexual fantasies.


PRETTY NIFTY. The dead as a work of art


FREAK SHOW. Photo-op with the first-prize costume winner, as P. "Tim Yap" Diddy, Jenni Epperson, Rajo Laurel and Boy Abunda pose in the background.

HELLRAISER meets Darth Maul. But what's he doing with a lamp?

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Makeup artists' real challenge

Lora Gabol

NO one can truly claim expertise in maquillage unless she can do eyes. Eye work, I think, is what makes putting on makeup a real art. Using color to create different looks, moods, even illusions, on a canvas that is just a section of the face is one of the biggest challenges among those in the beauty business. And now that dramatic eye makeup is all the rage, I'm sure you wouldn't want to be caught dead with bare lids!

While it takes training and experience to master makeup brushes and techniques, breaking down the "art" into manageable, practically fool-proof steps can yield equally stunning, pseudo-professional results. Amazingly, user-friendly products and a whole lot of patience can give new meaning to the phrase "practice makes perfect" in a blink of a pretty eye.

Prep time

After cleansing and toning, prep your eye area with an effective eye cream or gel before applying moisturizer. This helps the eye area absorb better the eye cream. Use your ring finger to gently pat a small amount of eye cream under the eyes and on the lids. This allows shadow and other eye makeup to adhere better, keeping colors true and long-staying.

Try Nivea Visage Q10 Plus Eye Zone Crème—the light formula smoothens out fine lines (look closely and you'll see them!) while reducing puffiness and dark circles.

Cover up

If you aren't getting enough sleep, or are genetically predisposed to having raccoon eyes, you simply can't go without concealer if you want vivid eye color and you don't want those circles to steal the show. Pick a creamy concealer one or two shades lighter than your skin tone and apply a few dots (use a concealer brush—this usually comes with the product) under your eyes and, yes, over your lids. Start with small amounts and adjust as needed. Using your ring finger, blend (pat, don't rub) and set with translucent loose powder.

Tip: Apply concealer right after moisturizing to help prevent creasing and caking. Shu Uemura has new Pro Concealers specifically to correct under-eye discoloration. If you want a product you can also use on blemishes and spots, try a palette duo or trio like Laura Mercier Secret Camouflage or Lancôme Palette Mix. You can customize your own shade to cover any problem area.

Arch of beauty

Maintain well-groomed brows for the cleanest makeup canvas, but don't tweeze right before applying color, especially if you have sensitive skin. To make brows appear well-groomed, shape them with an eyebrow powder (pencils tend to be harsh and might be difficult for newbies to handle). Simply fill in the gaps between hairs with a light brown or brown (depending on your natural hair color, but never black) powder. The brushes included in brow compacts will do the work for you. Try VMV Hypoallergenics Brow Kit in Espresso/Coal. Don't have enough time? Swipe on Shu Uemura's Eyebrow Manicure for a quick brow makeover. Frosted Brown blends with any hair color, while Frosted Rose will add interesting highlight to your arches.

True colors

After "brightening" your eye area, you're all set for color. Since you can't afford to play around with rainbow blends just yet, opt for a single color that packs enough punch, like a cool lilac or nature-inspired mint. Most single shadow shades are foolproof, will suit any skin tone and, best of all, don't require professional tools. I would recommend cream-to-powder formulas that are a cinch to apply and blend—just use your fingers and voila! Instantly gorgeous peepers!

Try Maybelline Cool Effect Eye Shadow (the best "celestial" shades), L'Oréal Colorfresco Cream Color (sheer and very natural color selection), or Lancôme Color Focus (vivid but amazingly wearable drama in a pot).

One fine line

For striking evening eyes, use eyeliner instead of dark eye shadow to prevent looking like you just had a fistfight. Keep your "day" color but intensify that stare by lining both upper and lower lids with the liner of your choice. Black will always be the first choice for bedroom eyes but, before you apply "charcoal," remember that dark colors aren't meant to create Winona-Ryder doe eyes. "Chinitas" might want to experiment with taupe or brown to highlight oriental lids.

I've discovered that a navy liner works wonders, too. The cool shade "wakes up" a face by making the whites of your eyes look clearer—perfect first aid for bloodshot, I-had-one-drink-too-many eyes. A white liner smudged onto the inner corners of your eyes has the same effect.

Curl power

The easiest pick-me-up for eyes? Curled and mascara-ed lashes! Avoid 90-degree curls by working your curler (you have to love the Self-Heating Curler from Avon) throughout the entire length of your lashes. Follow up with a waterproof mascara (a clear one for day, colored for night) for a flirty wink. Shiseido's Advanced Volume Mascara fattens lashes up without clumping and doesn't smudge!

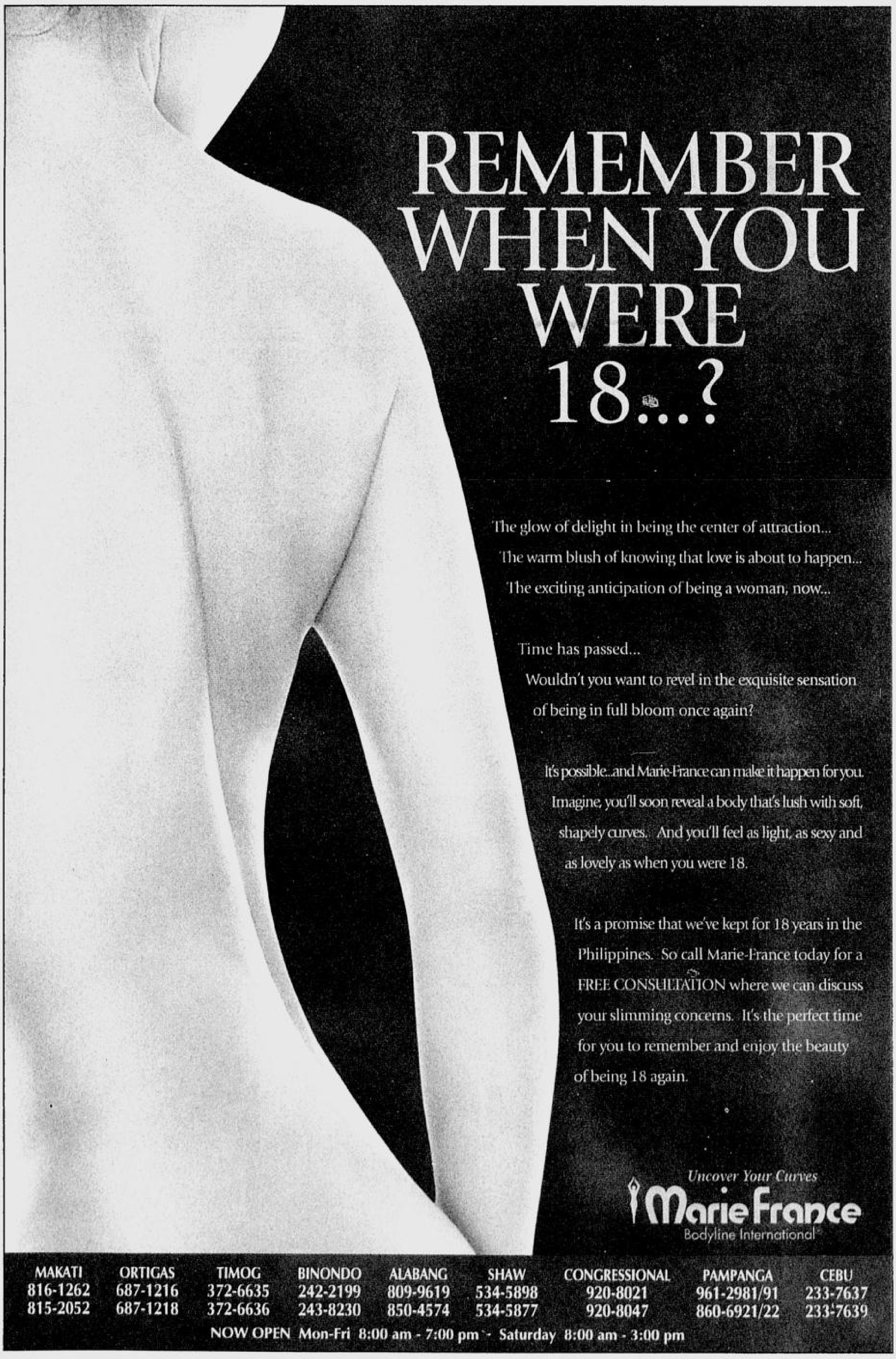
Take it off!

After mesmerizing everyone with your sizzling stare, get rid completely of every trace of makeup from your eyes. Top models swear by good old baby oil, while beauty purists believe in Pond's Cold Cream. Celebrities trust Shu Uemura Cleansing Oil to do the job—a single application washes off even the darkest, most stubborn liner. You can use it on your entire face, too.

For an extra anti-oxidant boost, invest in Shu's Premium Cleansing Oil with Japanese Green Tea and make washing your face the next best thing to an indulgent spa facial treatment. Pamper your eyes even more with a rich night cream for the eyes (Sisley's Botanical Eye and Lip Balm is a winner!) and rest those peepers with well-deserved beauty sleep.

Shu Uemura, Sisley, Lancôme at Rustan's Makati; Laura Mercier at Essenses, Rustan's Tower Makati; Shiseido at the Rockwell Power Plant; L'Oréal, Maybelline, Nivea at PCX; Pond's, VMV Hypoallergenics at leading department stores; Avon at SM Megamall.

E-mail the author at pdi_vanityfare@hotmail.com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Fall collection features three themes

DKNY Fall 2003 features a three-themed collection that delves into the lifestyles of the literati, painter and musician.

DKNY's Literature pieces mix plaid, pinstripes and tweeds. Layering is the ultimate luxury this season. Just like the pages of an author's best-seller, DKNY mixes sexy tailored jackets whether cutaway or cropped, with short-cut and cuffed flannel pants or multi-tiered minis.

DKNY Women's blank canvasses of satin, boucle and chiffon are rendered in a palette of chalk pastels to create its next collective: Art. The colors become bright splashes in the traditional textured feel of herringbone, lace, silk and knits, as a graphic interplay of sharp tailoring and relaxed silhouettes provide the necessary dramatic backdrop. Beads and rhinestones become precious hints of surrealism in the understated elegance of the collection.

In tune with all the fashion genres this season is the DKNY Music collection, a theme that puts the sharp cuts and detailing of the punk with the glamorous silhouettes of the lounge scene. With black as base color for the rocking wild collection of tux jackets and leather bombers, bondage jeans and bias-laced skirts, cocktail dresses and sequined zip-up cardigans, the collection hits high-notes with fashion's fickle-minded.

The DKNY Man, on the other hand, rekindles its ties with fashion's greatest rebels, the Beatniks. It features pants that fall perfectly in the cuff, best worn with a crumpled shirt, a faded leather coat or a rugged shearling sheath and unwashed hair.

DKNY is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists, Inc. and is available at the Power Plant Mall, 158 Designers' Blvd., Alabang Town Center and Rustan's Makati.

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